

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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## AT ANCHOR.

### CHAPTER I.

SO differently does the passage of time impress itself upon the old and the young that Dr. Gray, who had spent the years between fifty and sixty upon an isolated grazing farm in the West, felt himself still a stranger and a new-comer there, while his eldest child, a girl named Stella, to whom the same period of time represented the vivid, impressionable era between eight and eighteen, felt as if this had been always her home, and looked back upon the early years spent in the city with a sense of vagueness that was like the recollection of a dream.

Stella not only thoroughly knew this lovely, wild, free country, so far from the jar and fret of crowded cities, but she thoroughly loved it too. Once she had been impatient of its social aridity and mental limitations, and had been very glad of the release from these afforded by an invitation, from a sister of her mother's, in New York, to spend a month there. She had been, then, only sixteen, and her ardent temperament had been fired at the prospect before her as nothing had ever fired it yet, but at the end of the month Stella had come home with all her tastes and wishes altered,—longing only for a continuance of the old, free, open, active life, and setting her face against every suggestion of ever leaving it again. She was Dr. Gray's only child by his first marriage, and seemed in some way to have a peculiar claim upon his tenderness. He was a reserved man, and showed his feelings

little, but he was a kind husband and father, giving no one occasion to doubt his devotion to the somewhat uninteresting though eminently domestic lady he had chosen for his second wife, or the three sturdy boys she had borne him. Still, toward Stella, his only daughter, he seemed to hold himself differently, and, although the girl was on excellent terms with her step-mother, her father was her most intimate friend and was always the recipient of such slight confidences as she had to make. But when Stella came back from New York, although she made an effort to entertain them all, by telling of the sights she had seen and the sounds she had heard, she had no special confidences for her father, although he had a feeling that there was a nameless something about her that had need of explanation. She was more inclined to solitude than before,—spent more time alone in her room, and roaming over the wide fields or along the quiet river-banks with no companionship except her own thoughts,—and seemed somehow to have lost something of the light-heartedness heretofore so characteristic of her. In spite of all this, however, she was more loving to her father than ever, and more ardent in the expression of her affection for him.

"I never mean to leave you while I live again, papa dear," she would say. "I would like to forget that I had ever been away from you or known any other existence than this dear, simple, country life with you and mamma and the boys."

It was a pleasant thing to Dr. Gray to hear these words, for the most of his own life had been spent in the midst of the amusements and advantages of the city, and he sometimes felt that he had been selfish to condemn this young girl to the isolation of her present existence, and he was glad to know she felt it to be no hardship.

Dr. Gray had been, up to the last ten years, in circumstances of affluence and ease, and when at about the same time he lost the greater part of his fortune by disastrous investments and his health became seriously impaired, so that a more assiduous devotion to the duties of his profession seemed scarcely feasible, he had invested the remainder of his fortune in a large grazing farm in the West, and taken his family there in the hope of re-establishing his own health and finding a career for his sons. Mrs. Gray, who was one of the women who have no life outside of home, was equally satisfied in all places, and, as the experiment had proved most successful in promoting the doctor's health and there seemed to be a fair field ahead of the boys, the only qualms the good father had were in regard to Stella. He knew how sweet and love-compelling the girl's nature had been from a child, and he had foreseen that she would grow into a lovely woman, both as to character and appearance, and he thought it his duty to give her what are called



"opportunities," so he had been very glad when the visit to her mother's sister in New York was planned, and took care to see that Stella's wardrobe was ample and appropriate. She was only sixteen, however, and had the simplest tastes, and so, on her return, she had surprised him by giving back about half the money he had provided her with, and assuring him she had not needed it. Her aunt, whose principles were much opposed to the premature entrance of young girls into society, had approved the simplicity of Stella's tastes, and had advised her to put away her extra money until she should be eighteen, when she proposed that Stella should return to New York, spend the winter with her, and make her *début* into society.

The anticipated winter had come and gone, finding and leaving Stella at Grassmere, her own safe home. Mrs. Lacy, her aunt, had written for her urgently, and could scarcely be made to understand that the only obstacle that lay in the way of this young girl's enjoyment of a brilliant winter in New York society was the young girl's own disinclination. Her father wrote that he was perfectly willing and left the matter entirely to Stella, and Stella persistently declined. All this would seem very unnatural in a healthy, attractive young girl if she had had no reason beyond what appeared; but I must do Stella the justice to say that, although it lay very far under the surface, she had a reason.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE tract of land long known as Grassmere was a finely-located farm, stretching far and wide over great undulating fields, bounded on one side by a short range of hills, that were high for that country, one of which furnished a shelter from the sweeping winter winds for the big, rambling farm-house, half old and half new, and wholly inharmonious, that nestled down at its feet, not far from where the river ran. It was not a great, wide, expansive river, suggestive of the traffic of countries and the risk of lives, but a tranquil little landlocked stream, whose gentle waters rippled of peace and quiet and repose. Stella loved to watch its course from the window of her little bedroom, and she knew its cherished face in every expression, whether ruffled into superficial little frowns by the play of the hurrying winds, which were never strong enough to stir its placid bosom, or soothed into serene repose by the golden sunshine which seemed to shed upon it such a spell of calm that even the gently-flowing current in the centre seemed to move as if stealthily and to gurgle in a whisper. But better still did Stella love

to thread her way along its blooming banks, unconscious of the possibility of harm, and find some sheltered nook, where she could sit for hours, in the glow of the gracious sunshine, and watch the river and the sky, and dream long quiet dreams.

I will try to give you some idea how Stella looked, as she sat one evening on the river-bank. It isn't likely you have ever seen two such pairs of eyes as Stella's, and you are lucky if you have seen one. They are the rarest eyes of all,—deep, dark-lashed, tender blue; such eyes as have been compared, mistakenly, to sapphires, for sapphires give the idea of transparency, and these eyes appear to be deep beyond fathoming. In color they resemble more a bit of pure lapis-lazuli, but there that likeness must end too, for they look soft and tender and infinitely changeful. All this will tell you nothing unless you have seen a pair of eyes like Stella's; and if you have, you will prefer your memory of them to my description.

On this especial evening Stella wore a white dress. It was summertime, and warm even here. There were no frills and ruffles to this simple gown,—only a plain hemmed skirt, falling full and free from the waist, round which a sash of the same material—a soft, washable cotton fabric—was tied, hanging in a big bow behind. A little transparent white kerchief surrounded her throat, just now a little sun-burnt, in spite of the fact that Stella's customary summer head-gear was a blueingham sun-bonnet. Not unfrequently, however, it happened that, as now, this severely utilitarian article of dress was resting upon Stella's lap instead of her head. That she had been wearing it, however, the curly roughness of her hair bore witness. It was not banged or frizzed in any way whatever, but drawn tightly back in all its wavy brownness and twisted into a close knot behind. For the rest, Stella's little nose was at once irregular and captivating, her mouth and teeth were the ideal of what a healthy, youthful creature's ought to be, and her pure complexion and sound young figure admirably matched her features.

Stella was sitting very upright, on a ledge of rock, with her hands clasped around her knees and her eyes fixed on the water. Her attitude betokened activity of thought rather than lethargy, and suddenly, at the occurrence of some vivid memory, her face flushed hotly, and she shook her head impatiently, as if trying to throw off a vexing thought. This little vexing thought was an old enemy of Stella's, which she had been trying for four years to vanquish. Many a time she thought she had disarmed, if not destroyed it, but it had the most amazing power of lying quiet for a while and then rising in greater force than ever and asserting its disturbing dominance. Now, for instance, a sudden flash of memory had shown her a great luxurious drawing-room, brilliantly

lighted and fragrant with hot-house plants, in which a tall gentleman in evening dress and a slim girl in white found themselves for a moment alone, on the eve of the young girl's departure for her distant home. This gentleman had been very kind and pleasant to her during her month's visit. One memorable evening he had taken her to an opera, and another equally memorable time he had taken her to drive; and although both in the theatre and the park she had seen many men who were in other eyes than hers his equals in appearance and manner and all exterior points, to this young girl he had been pre-eminent. At the thought of going home she had minded most the parting with this gracious new-made friend, but, at the same time, something suggested to her that if he liked her as much as she liked him, perhaps he would say they need not part forever; and the young girl had been so utterly foolish as to think he would say so. But now he was telling her good-by, without a word of future meeting, though he took both of her hands and held them close in both of his, and asked her if she was sorry to part from him, and sought her eyes with his and made her look at him, although she was ashamed for him to see the tears that she had vainly tried to keep back. At sight of these he had drawn her closer and looked at her so tenderly that she had half believed he was going to kiss her, but just then a step was heard approaching, and he had said nothing more except good-by and gone away.

That young girl—was it herself or not herself?—had gone home the next day, with only two distinct consciousnesses in her mind,—that she was wretched, and that her father must not see her wretchedness. She had succeeded in keeping her secret very well, until there was no secret to keep. For the time was long past when she had felt herself so miserable, and now she believed herself happy. And yet this evening, more than for over a year past, she felt that she *was* that girl,—not an altered and radically different creature, but the same. Lately her memories of that scene had roused within her only indignant anger, and a burning sense of shame which her expanded womanhood had taught her, for having shown such feeling for a man who evidently had none at all for her, and who would only laugh at, or, worse still, pity her for it. But this evening—such tricks do our own hearts play us!—as Stella looked away across the water she seemed to see again those fond and penetrating glances; and as she listened to the rippling stream and the lullaby of the mother-birds in the branches overhead, she heard, instead of them, the tender cadence of a sweet, caressing voice, and her hands, as they tightly clasped each other, seemed conscious of a loving pressure.

Far away, across the river, beyond the most distant fields, the full moon was silently lifting itself into sight, at first but a little disk that

seemed to peep up from beyond the farthest stretch of land, to make sure that the sun had quite gone and it would not be blamed for trespassing. There being nothing in view but a brilliant after-glow on clouds and plains, the lady-moon took courage, and, waxing every moment bolder, stood revealed, at last, in all her meek majestic beauty. Fading sunlight and dawning moonlight seemed in league, this evening, to cast upon the world that subtle spell of which the young and ardent weave their visions. The gentleman that Stella had known and parted from so long ago was no longer anything in her life but a mortifying memory; but his had been the hand that had first opened to her the gates of romance through which there sometimes entered into her heart a nameless feeling that bore her upward out of the reach of the common daily round and made her whole life one supreme aspiration. She felt it keenly now. The world was so gracious and fair and lovely; there was such promise of good to come, in the face of the sky and the sounds of approaching nightfall. And yet how lonely, how utterly left to herself she felt!

A sound quite out of harmony with the tranquil summer evening aroused her. There were footsteps coming. Only one of the boys, perhaps, or one of the tenders of the cattle. She stood up, startled, but not alarmed, and, as she turned to look, a great bound of her heart almost stifled her. Standing a few paces off was a man, evidently a gentleman, dressed in a gray flannel shirt, knickerbockers, and long yarn stockings, a gun on his shoulder and a dog at his heels. A second glance showed Stella that his face was quite unfamiliar: it was only the erect carriage, the startled pause, and the gesture with which his sun-helmet was instantly removed that had made the girl fancy him to be the object of her recent thoughts.

"Excuse me," the stranger said, "but will you tell me if I am in the right road? I am looking for Dr. Gray's."

In the gathering twilight the stranger had not observed the house, though it was quite visible to Stella's eyes, and she answered, promptly,—

"I am Dr. Gray's daughter, and am just going home. I will be glad to show you the way."

The stranger thanked her, and went on to say,—

"My name is Bertrand. I am one of the four purchasers of the Westfields tract of land, and I suppose in this country I may call myself your neighbor in spite of the intervening miles. One of our number has been a little out of sorts, and so two of us volunteered to get a doctor for him. He doesn't know of it, and would have forbidden our doing so, but, as we've never known him to knock under before, we were sufficiently alarmed to make active steps seem expedient.

My comrade is behind somewhere,—or possibly ahead of me. I got off my horse to look out for some game, but I have been unsuccessful."

At this point they both caught sight of a man riding one horse and leading another, off in the fields to one side of them, but, as he was taking the proper direction to the house, his friend made no effort to accost him.

"My father is not a practising physician," said Stella, feeling very much at her ease with this straightforward young gentleman. She was going on, when her companion said, regretfully,—

"I am exceedingly sorry. I only heard of him as Dr. Gray, and I so hoped he would come over and see our friend; but if, as you say, he doesn't practise——"

"Oh, pray come and see him," said Stella. "I think he would certainly go; and I know he would be distressed if you went back. Besides, you are a long way from home, and you might lose your way if you attempted to return to-night."

"We are very ignorant about this country, I and my partners," answered the young man, smiling, "and I am afraid we have given proof of it by undertaking to ride over here so late and go back by moonlight. The distance does not amount to very much: the difficulty is in the risk of losing the way."

At this point they came up with the other man, who, having recognized his friend, had halted his horses and waited. He was not a little surprised when the two came near enough for him to get a distinct impression of Bertrand's companion.

"Ah, Estcott, you're ahead of me!" exclaimed Bertrand, coming up. "Allow me to present my friend Mr. Estcott, Miss Gray."

Mr. Estcott sprang from his horse, revealing a duplicate of his friend's costume, worn upon a very much smaller person, and as he doffed his white helmet Stella could dimly see an intelligent though plain face, with very dark eyes and hair and complexion.

Her acknowledgment of the introduction was civil, but rather hasty, and she immediately followed it by a request that they would fasten their horses and follow her into the house. On the porch they encountered Dr. Gray, to whom Stella at once consigned her two companions and passed on, vanishing within the wide old hall.

As soon as the visitors had briefly stated the object of their coming, Dr. Gray decided, almost without consulting them, that they were to stay where they were for the night. He promised to return with them in the morning and see their friend, saying he had been intending, ever since their arrival in the neighborhood, to call upon them, and had only been prevented by a stress of business from doing so before.



"They'll have to go into your room, Stella," Mrs. Gray said, desperately: the one casualty they were unprepared for at Grassmere was guests, and poor little Mrs. Gray was very helpless out of her settled routine. "The spare room is all upset, for I never dreamed it would be needed. You can go into the little hall-room for to-night, can't you?"

"Oh, certainly, mamma," said Stella; "but don't you be worried about entertaining these gentlemen. If they hadn't been prepared for roughing it, they never would have come out here; and as for providing for their comfort in the style they have been accustomed to, that it would be nonsense to attempt."

"How do you know what they have been accustomed to?" said Mrs. Gray. "It isn't safe to judge by looks."

"I think it's safe in this case," said Stella, "at least so far as to say that these two men are gentlemen who have been accustomed to ease and elegance all their lives."

So she made her sweet, old-fashioned bedroom prettier than usual, with some freshly-gathered flowers, and when the two young men found themselves within it, when they went up for a moment before tea, they gave vent to the amazement it aroused in them by only half-suppressed ejaculations.

"By George!" said Mr. Bertrand.

"By Jove!" said Mr. Estcott.

"But *won't* Hobart and Unc. be disgusted?" said Bertrand next.

"I really think," returned Estcott, "that it would be as well not to go into the particulars of our visit. Hobart, as likely as not, would cut our concern and return to New York: you know that was his reason for preferring to buy a ranch farther West and in a more remote locality: he wanted to do the thing thoroughly, or not at all. I can hear him exclaiming that he *can* stand the civilization of New York, but not the civilization of these parts!"

"Do look here, will you, at the contents of this book-shelf,—Tennyson, and Mrs. Browning, and Longfellow, if you please! and the pictures, too,—the Huguenots, here, and Romeo and Juliet."

"A little rudimentary," would be Unc.'s comment, I fancy," said Estcott.

"And here we have Max and Thekla," went on Bertrand. "I really think your idea is a good one, Estcott. We had better suppress all particulars. Unc. is not likely to go about very much, even when he gets well and strong again,—dear old man,—but I'm sure if he once knew it was possible to run up against this sort of thing he'd never leave the place."

"Evidently this is the young girl's room," went on Bertrand. "It's

too bad we should turn her out. I'd far rather they had let us sleep in the barn. I wish you had seen her when I came upon her. I frightened her sadly, poor little thing!—but not much more than she frightened me. I assure you it was several moments before I was convinced it was all real. I caught sight of her first sitting on a rock, with her hands clasping her knees and her eyes gazing out at the water, looking so still and dreamy; and the next instant she had sprung upright with such an alert air and well-carried little head that the change was wonderful. But there's the supper-bell, and we must go down."

At table, Stella sat between two of the boys, and occupied herself chiefly in suppressing their noisy talk and supplying their wants in the way of hot muffins and butter and milk, so as to preserve some resemblance to decorum, and all this filled up her time so completely that she had nothing to bestow upon the guests except an occasional demure glance, and even that was generally in the nature of a swift investigation as to whether it had been observed that Tommy was choking with laughter and muffin combined, or that Jim had tipped his chair backward and nearly overturned the table. These, the two elder boys, were dreadfully uncouth, and Stella had tried in vain to counteract the association of the herdsmen and hands about the farm, whose manners and methods seemed to Tommy and Jim so much more worthy of emulation than the more controlled usages of the members of their family. The youngest boy, who sat on one side of his sister, was a gentle, unobtrusive child, on whom she now and then turned an approving smile, as he sat up and ate his supper with much decorum and the air, it must be confessed, of a small prig. Bertrand, who was nearer to Stella than his friend, made one or two efforts to talk with her, but her replies were only monosyllables, and her attention was so evidently monopolized by the boys that he decided to defer his conversation until after supper. Estcott, for his part, was doing his duty bravely by his hostess, who, if he had but known it, would have better liked to be left alone.

And it happened after supper that the opportunity Bertrand had counted on never came. Dr. Gray took them off into the porch to enjoy a smoke in the moonlight, and they sat there talking until very late, and when they came in the ladies had retired. As it was planned that they were to set off very early in the morning, both young men acknowledged rather ruefully that their chance of seeing the daughter again was probably gone.

"Did it strike you," said Bertrand, when they were in their room together, "that perhaps the excellent doctor connived at this result? I rather believe that he knew we wanted to see the girl again, and, knowing as little of us as he does, he was more than willing that our

wishes should be frustrated. I don't blame him, I'm sure; for we may be arrant scamps for what he knows. I wonder if we couldn't discover some common friends, if we tried."

"Don't try, for heaven's sake!" said Estcott. "Remember what Hobart was saying last night of his experience of the smallness of the world. If we tell him we have discovered a civilized family in some of our nearest neighbors, he will tell you he is in mortal terror lest they should turn out near relations on his hands. And as for Unc., I shudder to think of his observations on the subject! Well, considering the fact that our two partners embarked in this enterprise for the purpose of admission into a state of uncivilization pure and simple, it is a little hard; though, for my part, I think it will sweeten my daily toil for the whole time to come, just to be able to reflect that there is such a lovely maiden as that within a day's riding."

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### CHAPTER III.

WHEN Dr. Gray returned from his visit to Westfields, as the young strangers' place was called, the evening meal was over, and Stella went into the dining-room with him to preside over the supper that had been kept for him.

"I hope you have had a pleasant day, papa," she said. "You look as if you had."

"I have indeed," said Dr. Gray: "it's been a rare experience to come into my life now. They are four as fine fellows as I ever came across, if appearances are to be trusted. The two who were here are the youngest,—one of their partners being, I suppose, thirty-five, and the other nearer to fifty. This one, by the way, whose name is Bell, seems to be the head of the concern. They all call him 'Uncle,' or 'Unc.,' and are plainly devoted to him. He is the one that's been sick; and you should have heard him scold them when he found they had been for a doctor. They tried to pretend that I had only come to make a friendly call, and had given me that cue beforehand; but it didn't go down with the old fellow at all. He is fat and ugly, and has a great rough shock of hair and a grizzly, shaggy beard, and was a great contrast to the young fellows; but they seem all to dote upon him, and took his berating like three lambs, and then set to work with the utmost humility to try to persuade him to let me prescribe, which he flatly refused to do. He wasn't going to die yet, he said, and if he did it was his own affair, and if his time had come he had no intention

of hanging back. I came forward here and waived the whole thing, establishing myself in their tent quite as if I had merely come to make a visit, and thereby making a demand upon his hospitality, which the old fellow couldn't ignore; but all the while I kept my eye upon him, and before I came away I managed to get a word with him in private, when I told him that it was all very well to talk about dying, but that a sickness neglected very often turned into chronic ill health, with death only at the end of long years of pain and uselessness, and by these representations got him to let me examine and prescribe for him. I don't think it is anything very serious now, but it might easily become so, and I warned him that he was in no condition for hard work, and I think I convinced him of it. Some men—and he's one of them—can be frightened a great deal sooner by the suggestion of prolonged sickness than death. I told him if he didn't want to be an incubus upon somebody's hands he had better face the fact that he would have to take some care of himself; and I found that had its effect. Two of the men rode part of the way back with me; and if you could have heard the anxiety they expressed about that rough old fellow, and the gratitude they showered upon me for having persuaded him to give over hard work for a time and agree to rest and take care of himself, you'd have thought he was their sweetheart. They acknowledged that one cause of their agreeing so quickly to stay all night, last night, was because the others would not be able to go to work without them, and 'Unc.' would be forced, therefore, to rest."

"What sort of work, papa?" said Stella. "What do they do?"

"Why, you'd be amused," said Dr. Gray, smiling. "They have bought an enormous tract of land and stocked it superbly. It reminded me of 'the cattle upon a thousand hills.' Well, they have got a lot of buildings to put up, of course, and they are living in tents for the present. They are going to build all the cattle-sheds and farm-buildings first, and, last of all, a house. They are hauling their own lumber from a distance of thirty miles, and, if you'll believe me, those swells get up at four every morning and start off with their teams and never knock off work until sun-down. It's funny to look at their hands. Unc.—as they call him—could never have had very delicate ones, and his show no scratches; but the other fellows were laughing at theirs, all scarred and cut, with handling the logs, but so white and delicate. They're confident, however, that before the hauling is done they will match Unc.'s own, which seems to be the goal of their ambition.

"He says he told them," Dr. Gray went on, "that they were not fit for hard work, and that men couldn't go straight from an endless succession of balls, and dinners, and club card-parties, and dancing at-

tendance on ladies, to this sort of thing ; but they said they would show him whether they could or not, and one of the young fellows said he flattered himself they were showing him ; but Unc. was plainly not for easy dealing, and said it was too early to settle the question yet. I suppose they must be rich fellows, for I never saw such a camping paraphernalia in my life. When I went into what they call the toilet tent, their dressing-cases and appliances were perfectly bewildering. Unc. explained to me that none of these luxuries belonged to him : they were the property of the youngsters, he said ; he hadn't anything of the sort. 'That's because nature made *us* with imperfections which require palliatives,' the oldest of the three others said, and then he added that Unc. supposed that he was giving him a wholesome lesson in humility whenever he included him in the term youngsters, not realizing that he had reached an age when youth was no longer an opprobrious term, but rather the contrary ; though he can't be over thirty-five or -six," the doctor added, "and he's by all odds the best-looking of the lot."

"What was his name, papa?" said Stella. "You haven't mentioned it."

"Let me see," said Dr. Gray : "the one they call Unc. is named Bell, and the two that were here are Bertrand and Estcott. I do believe I've forgotten the other fellow's name ; but I have his card somewhere. I'll get it for you while you fill my cup."

Stella poured the coffee and handed it to him, and as she did so he put into her hand a small visiting-card on which was engraved,—

"Mr. Charles E. Hobart."

When Dr. Gray looked up, after his first draught from the fresh cup of coffee, he found, to his amazement, that Stella had vanished. Had some one called her suddenly away, without his hearing it? He was certainly growing a little deaf. Beyond this, he thought no further of the matter.

Stella, meantime, had flown swiftly up the long old staircase and shut herself in her own room. She held the little card in her hand, and read the name over and over again. What a strange, strange chance it was that had brought Mr. Hobart across her path again! How she hoped she would never see him! If he ever should come to the house she would probably be able to avoid it, and there was no chance of her meeting him elsewhere. She really felt as if she could hardly bear to meet him again. Not that she retained a vestige of that old childish sentimentality about him ; but it made her cheeks hot to remember that she had cried at the thought of parting with him, and that he had seen her tears! How foolish, how unmaidenly, he must have thought her! She dared not hope that he had set her conduct



down to childishness, though she *had* been the merest child then, and now that she was a woman she saw how inexcusable and silly her conduct had been. Well, she would do her best to avoid him, but if she should meet him she would then do her best to convince him that she was a different being from that ridiculous, sentimental child! Perhaps he would not recognize her; she had altered and even grown in the past four years, and it might be; but then she thought of the utter impossibility of her having forgotten him. His image, tall, elegant, full of a strange repose that she had seen in no one else, rose before her mind's eye now, and, supposing his memory to be even half as good as hers, that hope was out of the question. She seemed to see before her now the keen, dark face, with the penetrating eyes, whose beauty only those on whom he had looked tenderly could guess, the refined features, the well-kept dark hair and moustache, the exquisite white teeth, on one of which there was a little flaw that she knew well, and the slow smile. She seemed to hear the low, clear-ringing voice, and to feel the caressing hand-clasp. And to think he was again so near her! Was there ever anything so wonderful? At one moment she felt sorry, and asked herself why she was not glad, and at another, when she felt glad, she accused herself for not being sorry.

Your perceptions are not of the most delicate order, reader, if you think Stella was in love with this man. It was not that. He was simply the manly ideal of a fastidious and ignorant young girl with an enthusiastic temperament and keen sensibilities. She would probably have admired him as much had he never taken the pains to notice her; but since he had been kind and thoughtful of her, he had won from her a stronger feeling than admiration, and even set vibrating within her certain chords that lay very close around her heart: but what might have been never was, and now the strongest feeling she had about him—stronger than her perception of his charm or her recollection of his kindness—was intense indignation against him for having made her cry, and mortification at his having seen her weakness. There was only one reason for her really wishing to see him, and when she thought of that she felt impatient for the meeting; and that was that he might be made aware of the wide difference between the foolish child of four years ago and the matured young woman of to-day! Perhaps, if she could persuade him of that, it would be worth while to endure the undesirable agitation of meeting him. For it would agitate her, and she was getting on so contentedly and quietly now, so firmly settled in the old monotonous routine of home-life. But, no matter what her inward perturbation might be, she was not afraid of self-betrayal. She had implicit trust in the strength of her incentive to calmness and composure.

## CHAPTER IV.

IN a region so sparsely settled as that in which the scene of this story is laid, churches are generally few and far between, and the spiritual needs of humanity are entirely subservient to their physical wants, both being more or less in abeyance to the all-absorbing consideration of the care of the animal creation, whose well-being or the reverse makes all the difference between success and failure.

Dr. Gray, who was a good churchman, had long ago had himself appointed lay-reader for this section, and was very scrupulous in the discharge of his duties. There was a school-house in the neighborhood, that was opened for only about two months out of the twelve; but all the year round the attendance of the public was invited there on Sundays, and generally there was a fair congregation. To the regular church service there was always added a sermon, selected from some favorite author of the doctor's, which was far ahead of anything any resident clergyman they could have had would have given them. The service and sermon were followed by a short Sunday-school session for the children, during which the parents chatted in groups outside or remained to be edified within, as they chose. With the exception of Dr. Gray and Stella and the boys, the congregation, both big and little, consisted entirely of a class known farther west as cow-boys, and a few small farmers and their families. It was understood that in the course of time the bishop was to make them a visitation, but, as this contingency continued to appear rather remote, it required a great effort, as well as a consistent example, on the part of Dr. Gray, to keep his recruits together. He proved equal to the demand, and was so conscientious in the discharge of his duties, and so ably seconded by Stella, who might be said almost to compose the choir, that the attendance of the congregation had been a rather more steady thing than is commonly the case in such undertakings.

It was an exquisite Sunday morning, and the blessed Sunday calm that, in crowded cities, shows itself by the silence of the mighty voice of trade, and a certain freshness of attire and relaxing of expression in the people that pass to and fro along the streets, was manifested in this isolated region in a brooding stillness over the face of nature, hardly less significant. The cows, with faces at all times as solemn as if every day were Sunday, seemed for the most part to prefer, on this day, even to the luxuriant feast spread out by acres before them, the more meditative form of dining known as chewing the cud, and one could even fancy that they had an air of conscious decorum in the fact of not grazing. The vast, far-reaching plains seemed to lie stiller than

usual, under the pervading glory of the still sunshine. Even the little streams had a subdued Sunday gurgle in their sound, and the great crows and buzzards that looked like small sparrows far up in the blue tilted their outstretched pinions sideways, and described great crescents in the air, with a semblance of awe and solemnity that almost made their every motion seem an act of praise. The nearer birds flew by with an unusual sedateness, as if they were going to church, and twittered so gently that their songs seemed hymns. One provident bird-father, whose brood was too young for ecclesiastical observances, flitted through the mild air with a worm in his beak, and as he lighted beside the grassy nest he chirped so reprovingly at the greedy motions of his young that one might have thought he was reminding them to be temperate in their meats and drinks on Sunday and not disgrace their pious church-going mother. The very flowers seemed to bloom with a milder beauty than on week-days, and one could fancy that their odors smelt of incense. The great, majestic cloud-banks piled high up away in the west were as white and still as marble, and looked as if they might be temple walls.

Very different were the humble temple walls beneath, where Dr. Gray was reading the word of God to a handful of uncouth worshippers, too ignorant and untaught to do more than grasp at its spirit, which seemed clearest to their minds, perhaps, when Stella sang. Dr. Gray was reading out a hymn now, in a fine impressive voice, when there was a slight stir near the door, and two young men entered softly. Stella glanced toward them, and then let her eyes fall. She dared not look again; her whole mind was concentrated on the necessity to be calm and to carry out her part as if nothing had happened. When Dr. Gray finished reading the hymn, the little congregation rose, and Stella rose with them. She did not look toward the door, but she dimly perceived that the two strangers had risen also and were waiting with the rest of the congregation. What were they waiting for? A sudden blur of mind had caused her to forget for an instant, but now, as she remembered, she lifted up her pure young voice and sang:

Thou hidden love of God, whose height,  
Whose depth unfathomed no man knows,  
I see from far thy beauteous light,  
Inly I sigh for thy repose:  
My heart is pained, nor can it be  
At rest, till it find rest in thee.

It seemed the very spirit of the blessed tranquillity that brooded over the face of nature on that day,—a verbal expression of the aspiration pervading earth and air and sky; and Stella's voice, true, steady,

clear, and artless, as well as Stella's reverent face, might well have helped to bear the lesson home.

Perhaps the two strangers had felt that there was a message in the exalted loveliness of that serene summer Sunday, and it may be they better understood now that this message was, "Lift up your hearts."

A few voices had joined in with Stella's, but they were mostly the low, muffled tones of men, who were too timid to go any further than was necessary to show that they were obeying Stella's frequent urgent request that they would "try;" and they seemed no more than a subdued accompaniment to the girl's thrilling tones.

When the service was over, and the greater part of the congregation had gone outside, Dr. Gray opened the Sunday-school with a short prayer, and then, leaving the catechising of the children to Stella, he went out to welcome the visitors, who were Mr. Bertrand and Mr. Hobart.

They were in their flannels and long stockings, as usual, and were half inclined to apologize for not dressing,—a necessity which had not occurred to them beforehand,—and half ashamed to explain to Dr. Gray the object of their mission. It seemed they had been on their way to his house, when some one had told them that he would be found at the school-house, a little nearer at hand, and so they had come here, not, in reality, to attend service, but to see Dr. Gray, the object of their visit being to ask him for some further medical advice concerning their partner, Mr. Bell. They were obliged to act surreptitiously, or they might be forbidden to act at all, Unc. was so autocratic. He had improved rapidly, it seemed, under Dr. Gray's treatment, and they were most anxious that it should be continued. All this was explained by Bertrand, while his friend stood by in silence; but, now that he had finished, Hobart, who had had time to contemplate and master his amazement in recognizing Stella, said, simply,—

"I have just been telling my friend that Miss Gray, your daughter, proves to be an old acquaintance, whom I have been indescribably astonished to see in this unexpected way. I met her, several years ago, at Mrs. Lacy's house in New York, and I hope she may not have forgotten me."

"Forgotten you! I dare say she remembers you well enough, and will be glad to find you out in the person of a new neighbor. Well, we may get used to most other things, but the strange meetings that come about in this life of ours will give us food for surprise as long as we live, I suppose. Stella will be done with the children presently, and will find it a pleasant surprise to encounter an old friend outside."

"'Acquaintance' she will probably call it," answered Hobart; "but

if she is kind enough to remember me at all, I shall feel greatly obliged to her. And somehow the word acquaintance seems to have no meaning in the life we lead out here."

"Oh, no," said Dr. Gray, heartily: "you must consider that you've left that word behind you. If we are not enemies in this country, we are friends. But Stella seems to be a long time over her lesson to-day. Would you like to go inside and hear the children sing?"

The question was put with such absolute simplicity and good faith that both young men hastened to accept, with a manner that implied that he had hit upon the thing in all the universe most in keeping with their aspirations.

"You must go in very softly," said Dr. Gray, "and not let her know you are there, else she might be too bashful to go on. I love to hear the singing, but I shouldn't wonder if my fancy for it is because Stella does the most of it."

The door stood open, and the two young men, accompanied by Dr. Gray, entered as softly as possible. Stella was standing with her back to the door, and the children were ranged in a long irregular line, facing her.

"Now, children, you know this," she was saying, encouragingly. "Do sing out, and say the words plainly. Now begin." And, raising her sweet voice rather softly, she began.

The children, led by her, went through the verses of the little hymn, and then Stella proposed another, and went from that to another, until Dr. Gray saw fit to curtail the exercises. As soon as he walked up, Stella motioned to the children to kneel for the concluding prayer, and when she knelt the young men down near the door fell softly on their knees also. There was a moment's stillness after the benediction, and then, as the little congregation rose, Stella turned and faced the young men. The surprise she felt at seeing them flushed her cheek for an instant, as she had kept the children unusually long, hoping the strangers might take their departure, and when her father had returned she had felt certain they were gone. Her self-possession returned to her quickly, however, as she walked down the old school-room, holding the hand of her smallest pupil, and not meeting the gaze of Hobart, which was fixed upon her.

She was dressed in a repetition of the white costume she had worn upon the rocks that day, save that this one was fresh and that one tumbled. Where the ends of her little fichu were tucked away in her dress, there were some sprigs of maidenhair fern that one of the children had brought her, having heard her one day express a fancy for the plant. The blue sun-bonnet had been discarded in favor of a straw



hat with a white scarf around it that partly shaded her face. Hobart, who remembered her as being pretty, was unprepared to find her now beautiful. He had preceded her from the room, as if it had been really a church, and stood waiting. As she came out, he stepped forward, holding his hat in one hand and extending the other, and saying, frankly,—

"Have you forgotten me, Miss Stella Gray?"

Stella looked at him, then gave him her hand, and answered, coolly,—

"Not at all, Mr. Hobart. I remember you very well."

Bearing in mind the fact that Hobart believed Stella to be up to this moment unsuspecting of his presence, it was a little disconcerting to be greeted so coldly; and in any case she might, he thought, have been more cordial. He even fancied that her manner to Bertrand was more friendly; and Bertrand was the acquaintance of an evening! How changed she was! Not the same creature at all as the vivid, ardent little thing who used to seem to him so full of feeling and emotion. She looked so stately now, and carried her head so high, that it seemed impossible to hope to awaken in her any responsive feeling, while of old he had felt that he could, if he chose, control every vibration of her tremulous emotion, and had been rather proud of himself that he had resisted the temptation that had often presented itself, in his rather intimate intercourse with the Lacys, to draw forth from the enthusiastic child some expression of feeling for himself. He had not, as Stella thought it possible, forgotten their parting and the young girl's agitated grief, and it just occurred to him now that perhaps she remembered it also, and bore him a grudge, such as very young ladies are liable to, for having seen the betrayal of her emotion.

Dr. Gray, who seemed to take it for granted that the two must have much to say to each other, had turned off with Bertrand.

"I saw your aunt, Mrs. Lacy, a month ago," Hobart said, merely because it was necessary to say something. "She was then about to leave for the sea-shore,—for pleasure, I suppose, as she looked too thoroughly well to go for health."

"I have not heard from her for some time," Stella replied.

"I suspect you are under her displeasure," returned Hobart, smiling. Stella divined the smile, and knew just what it meant, though she was not looking at him. "She told me some time ago that she was quite angry with you for the pertinacity with which you refused her invitations to return to New York, although, as far as she could see, you had no reason except disinclination."

"She found me out, did she?" said Stella, merrily. "Poor Aunt Mamie! she does so hate not to have her way."

"And yet," said Hobart, directly, ignoring her last sentence, "you seemed sorry to leave New York."

"He might at least have spared me this!" thought Stella; but before she could reply Hobart went on.

"Perhaps I make a mistake in reminding you of it," he said, "as I believe very young ladies resent nothing so much as being thought emotional. It seemed to me natural enough that a quiet little country maiden who had spent a month in the midst of the delights of city life with a kind, indulgent aunt should feel regretful at the thought of leaving it all, and if the two tears I happened to see on the brink had really been shed, and followed by others, it would have been nothing strange."

He was furtively watching her face, beneath its hat-brim, as he spoke, and he saw the look of relief that it showed at these words, though he had not the remotest conception of the vast extent of that relief, or how heavy and sore had been the burden he had lifted from her heart. For his own part, he was perfectly aware that he had given an impression of the memory the circumstance had left upon his mind which was at variance with the reality. He knew those tears *had* been for him, and he was not ignorant of the fact that the little thing had been very fond of him, and might easily have been made more so, but he thanked his stars that he had made no effort to bring about this result, and could not accuse himself of having trifled with her for one moment even, unless he had gone a shade too far in taking leave of her so affectionately. It seemed incredible now to remember how responsive she had been to that half-careless fondness. Could this tall young maiden, looking as unapproachable as Diana and as cool as any wood-nymph, be the same?

Dr. Gray and Bertrand now came up, the former saying, in a tone that seemed to admit of no refusal, that the gentlemen must by all means return to dinner with him. Bertrand looked at Hobart, who was on the point of declining, when Stella, in obedience to a look from her father which escaped the observation of the young men, hastened to second the invitation, which was accepted.

"As Stella and I are walking," said Dr. Gray, "we will either have to follow you on, or else one of you gentlemen can lend me a horse and walk with my daughter."

Hobart fancied that the girl's eyes made choice of Bertrand, so he said he would give place, and went off to where the horses had been tied, and, mounting, rode away with Dr. Gray beside him. The distance was scarcely a mile, through lovely verdant fields, and the equestrians, who rode slowly, were in sight all the way.

## CHAPTER V.

"How awfully odd it seems, your knowing Hobart!" Bertrand began, as they were walking on together. "Your father's name had suggested nothing to him."

"Quite naturally," said Stella, smiling. "There isn't much significance in Gray."

"You met him in society in New York, did you?" asked Bertrand.

"I met him at my aunt's house four years ago, when I was considered ineligible for society. He was intimate at the house, and used to come familiarly when I was allowed to appear. In that way I got to know him pretty well."

"Four winters ago I was still at college: so there would have been no chance of my meeting you. But Estcott knows Mrs. Lacy. Did you ever meet him there?"

"No," said Stella, "I met very few gentlemen. Are you all four New-Yorkers?"

"Three of us are. Mr. Bell, whom we all call Unc,—short for Uncle,—is from nowhere in particular, or rather from every country on the habitable globe. I wish you knew him; though perhaps a young lady would see little in him to fancy. None the less he's the grandest fellow alive."

"I suppose you all find it necessary to be very fond of each other, living together as you do."

"Yes; it's the only way to keep from hating each other violently. But really I don't think four fellows could be got together who could suit each other better; though the real secret of our harmony is Unc's control of us all. He keeps us pretty closely under whip, except Hobart, whom he allows some license to, because he says he can stand it. He thinks Estcott and me a couple of infants. Don't you think Hobart's awfully good-looking?" he said, suddenly. "I believe he looks handsomer, if anything, in his rancher's costume."

Stella was saved the necessity of a reply by the eagerness with which the young man went on:

"He was looking over a lot of old letters the other day, in clearing out his desk, and he suddenly brought to light a photograph of himself that was the swellest thing you ever saw. I think it had been returned to him by some girl he had had an affair with, for it fell out of the folds of a letter, and I picked it up. It was a full-length picture, taken in full evening dress, his hair parted clean in the middle, as he wears it, and everything so well done about him. Unc. took pos-

session of it, and nailed it up against our brick chimney, and scratched under it, in chalk, 'Cow-boy Charley.' (His name is Charles, you know.) I often fancy how some poor girl, who has doubtless spooned and mooned over it no end, would be shocked to see it with its present surroundings and legend."

When he looked at Stella's face, he was surprised to see that she was not laughing. The emotion his story had aroused in her was something very far removed from mirth.

"How do you know it ever belonged to a lady?" she asked.

"I don't know it, but I have confidence in the correctness of the conjecture. Hobart used to be perfectly deadly to the ladies, and might be still if he wanted to; but he gave up flirtation several years ago, for some reason. I have never found out what it was. I am sure if the ladies were as kind to me as they invariably are to him I'd not forsake their standard."

When Stella and Bertrand reached the house, she left the latter on the porch with the two gentlemen who had arrived first, and went in to see if her services were desired by Mrs. Gray. The boys, who had gone home directly after Sunday-school, had brought the intelligence of the strangers' presence at church, and Mrs. Gray had foreseen their being asked to dinner, and was busy making things ready for them, for such servants as were procurable in that region were not to be left for a moment without watching. Hobart, it happened, was so situated in his seat on the porch that he could see along the passage upon which the dining-room opened, and as he talked with Dr. Gray and Bertrand he furtively kept his eye upon this passage, in and out of which Stella was flitting. There was no other word to describe the girl's light-stepping, free, unconscious motions, and her simple dress, with its full short skirt, seemed the one of all others suited to her.

When the gentlemen were presently summoned in to dinner, Hobart took some pains to get himself placed beside Stella, but it seemed to be understood that her seat was always between two of the boys, and he found himself compelled to give it up. His next thought was to be seated opposite her, and this he managed to effect. As he watched her during the meal, it became evident that her manner toward him had altered slightly. She was perceptibly less stately, and did not seem now to avoid his gaze, and all this suggested to Hobart that perhaps she had taken more seriously than he could have supposed the fact of her having shown her childish fondness for him; and now that he had succeeded in concealing from her his real understanding of the matter and putting it on other grounds, he resolved not to refer to it again.

When the meal was ended, and they all rose, Dr. Gray frustrated Stella's intention of remaining behind, by saying to her,—

"I am going to leave the gentlemen for a little while to you, Stella, while I go off to the barn to see that things are all right.—I find it necessary," he remarked to his guests, "to exercise a personal supervision in everything, with such labor as we get here."

"I am sure you are very right," said Hobart, as they all came out into the hall together. "I wish you'd give Bertrand a lesson in supervising while Miss Gray takes care of me in-doors. That sort of thing falls mainly to him in our concern."

Bertrand at once acceded. He had had the privilege of Miss Gray's society on the walk from church, and it seemed only fair that Hobart should now have his innings. He had not failed to yield a hearty tribute of admiration to the young girl's sweetness and beauty, but his admiration was of that tempered quality which a man with a preoccupied heart accords to a woman who is not *the* woman. All the men at the ranch knew of Bertrand's engagement, for he made no secret of his hope that this business venture might warrant him in marrying in the course of another year and bringing home a bride. The four friends had each an equal share in the ranch, but the difference lay in the fact that with Bertrand that share represented all he had in the world, while Estcott had as much again in two other investments, and Hobart was rich. As to the fourth partner, Bell, nobody knew what his circumstances were. He had inherited a considerable fortune years ago, but, with the most frugal personal habits, he yet spent a great deal of money, and did not hesitate to dig deep into his principal when occasion required. He never told what he did with his money, but occasionally people whom he had helped would disobey his emphatic instructions, by telling how he had lavishly paid off a friend's debts, or given some young fellow a start in life, or endowed with a modest establishment a young girl cousin, whom he knew little about, except that the barrier of poverty stood in the way of her immediate marriage to a worthy though impecunious young man who loved her. A few such items as these had reached the ears of his friends, and had added to the hearty enthusiasm they already felt for the older man; but not one of them would have dared to betray his knowledge to Unc.

When Hobart and Stella were left alone together, the latter led the way into the big, dim, cool old parlor, with its ugly, comfortless-looking furniture and air of utter unsuggestiveness. She asked him to sit down, and tripped across the floor to let in a little more light through the closed blinds, and then returned, and seated herself near him on one of the stiff hard chairs, upon which she rested as prettily as a bird



on a twig. Hobart, meanwhile, was running over in his mind how he could choose a subject that it would please her to talk upon. An instinct warned him to avoid old times, and he said, tentatively,—

"I suppose you take a great interest in this little congregation and your father's strong efforts in behalf of those about him here: don't you?"

"Why, of course!" said Stella, smiling. "How could I help it? It is the only way in which the feeling of really helping and doing something ever comes to me. I suppose a man knows all about that feeling, and it therefore has not the same charm; but there is so little for me to do, that I don't know how I should get along without the Sunday-school and services; and when it has happened that real good has come to people from papa's unremitting efforts, it is something worth feeling to remember that I have had a hand in it indirectly. You have no idea what up-hill work it was at first; but papa always said if we resolved in the beginning to be content with small results if we didn't have big ones, that would keep us up to the mark; and it has."

"Why did I never hear you sing in New York, nor ever even hear of your voice?" said Hobart.

"Because I never sang there, I suppose," said Stella, "and Aunt Mamie never thought of asking whether I could or not. Besides, I would never have dared to sing before her."

"As you haven't the slightest idea how misplaced such a hesitation is, I shall not blame you for it," said Hobart, "but I should like to think your voice would have the cultivation it deserves. Surely when you go to New York again you will have lessons?"

"When I go to New York again I shall,—probably!" laughed Stella.

"What does that mean?"

"It means a very remote chance."

"But you surely mean to go back, some day?" Hobart said.

"No, I don't. I mean just the contrary."

"Then where do you mean to go?"

"Nowhere," said Stella.

"Not at present, perhaps," said the young man; "but some time—and before long, I hope—you will want to go out and see the world."

"Oh, I've seen the world," said Stella, at which naïve acknowledgment her companion slightly smiled, "and I didn't like it. This is much nicer, I think."

"Are you only making fun, or are you in earnest?" Hobart asked. "I really am anxious to know."

"I am entirely in earnest," said Stella. "I *don't* care anything about New York. Do you?"

"But New York is not the world; and, besides, you have seen next to nothing of New York. You haven't the faintest idea of what it is in its social aspect, or what are the manifold pleasures and amusements it affords."

"You have, I suppose," said Stella. "It is probable that you know all about it, in such aspects as these."

"Yes," admitted Hobart, "I know it pretty well. I ought to, at any rate."

"And you have travelled abroad, perhaps," said Stella, "and know other countries too?"

Hobart, although he began to see her drift, was obliged to admit this also.

"And yet, after it all, you seek a refuge here! You would not do so, I suppose, unless this life made an appeal to you stronger than the other,—unless it seemed to you best. Then why may I not accept the verdict of your experience, since it coincides with what my strongest instincts teach me?"

"I confess myself floored, so far as the argument goes," said Hobart. "Yet it is out of the question that the results of my life can have any value as a guide to yours. If the circumstances and experiences which I have known, since I was the age you are now, could be yours for the years that must intervene before you arrive at my present age, you, with your nature and character, and with the radical difference made by your being of the opposite sex, might—indeed, would—reach very different results."

"Do you think yourself any the better for the life of wide experience you have had?"

Hobart hesitated a moment.

"You are determined to go deep, Miss Gray," he said. "I wish I could believe you were in fun, as people mostly are when they talk upon these subjects. Then I should know better how to answer you."

"I am not in fun," said Stella, "and although you can of course decline to answer at all the questions I put, I should think it very unfair of you to answer them insincerely."

Evidently she was thoroughly in earnest, and as Hobart looked into her candid eyes he felt no longer any disposition to jest.

"You may ask me any question you choose," he said, "and I pledge myself to answer truly, or not at all."

In the pause which had preceded this remark, Stella had had time to reflect that she had allowed herself to betray a degree of earnestness

and ardor for which she now felt some qualms. So, instead of speaking, she only leaned back in her stiff little chair and shook her head.

"I am waiting to be questioned," said Hobart, smiling.

"I don't think I have anything to ask," she said.

The young man looked disappointed.

"Why?" he said, rather eagerly. "I can see you have a reason."

"If I have any, beyond my own irrational impulse, it is a sort of fear of——" She broke off suddenly.

"A fear of what?"

"Well, of being laughed at," said Stella.

"Is it possible you can believe I would laugh at you?" said Hobart, regretfully.

"Well," said Stella, who really longed to go on, and yet was terrified at the thought of doing something odd, "I don't think I shall have the courage to proceed until you have answered the question as to whether you think yourself any better off for what you have seen of the world."

"If I said yes," answered Hobart, "wouldn't that be to admit that I believed myself to have been, during these years, mounting an ascending scale from ignorance and innocence to knowledge and excellence? If so, I cannot truthfully say it. I don't pretend to have improved my time or made good use of my opportunities, but how far the fault lies in me and how far in circumstances I am unable to decide."

"Do you ever fancy," said Stella, forgetting the rather singular part she was playing, in her strong interest in the subject under consideration, "that you would have made a great deal more of your life under other circumstances which you can imagine?"

"Oh, frequently! If everything had been different with me, I should have been no end of a fine fellow."

"Do you mind my asking how old you are?" said Stella.

"I'm not sure but I do. Still, I will respect my pledge. I am thirty-four."

"I thought you rather older; but surely that is young. Why do you speak as if the *impulse* of life was over with you?"

"I don't speak so, and I don't feel so in the least; but I will confess, since we have got to such plain speaking, that what you have said of yourself makes somewhat that sort of impression on me. You have announced your intention to cling deliberately to a life of utter stagnation, which cannot, in its nature, furnish your life with any real impulse or inspiration."

"I do get a little suffocated now and then," said Stella, "but the reflection that I am of the sex of whom little is required is a great

comfort to me. I know my preferring to live and die just where I am, rather than face the world and its dangers, is pure cowardice, and if I were a man it would kill me to feel this; but, being a woman, I console myself with the reflection that weakness and cowardice are my sex's attributes."

She rose to her feet, as she finished speaking, and, with the air of stateliness which her slim figure always had when she was standing, she looked the reverse of weak or cowardly. She was, in reality, not a tall young woman, but her erectness made her look taller than she was. Hobart recognized a certain power in her which she was unconscious of herself, and it seemed to him impossible that this fine young creature should be cast for an insignificant part in the drama of life.

"Shall we walk toward the barn and look papa and Mr. Bertrand up?" said the girl, with a sudden change of tone that surprised her companion, and, without waiting for his reply, she led the way from the room, and Hobart was obliged to follow. Was she perhaps a little bored? he wondered. It seemed hardly possible, with the ardent manner he recalled. That manner now, however, was nothing but a memory, for the young woman at his side had not a vestige of it.

"I will show you the way and find them for you, if I can," she said, as she paused in the hall to look about for a hat. Her own had been put away up-stairs, and there was only the blue-checked sun-bonnet in sight; but when she had taken this up and carried it with her she suddenly found it impossible to put it on, and preferred to bare her lovely skin to the sun's full rays, to the alternative of sacrificing her dignity so far as to assume this sun-bonnet. She had never felt it to be a sacrifice of dignity heretofore, but then she had never before been in a presence that made her feel conscious of the fact that she had absolutely outgrown her childhood and must be equal to the demands made upon her as a woman. She left the talk almost entirely to her companion, as they went along, and did not even look at him, which gave him all the better opportunity of looking at her. With her face fearlessly bared to the full light of the afternoon sun, without even the shadow of the straw hat-brim she had worn in the morning, she passed with the composure of unconsciousness the ordeal of the young man's scrutinizing gaze. Little need had she, he thought, to flinch at such a test! The absolute realness of her beauty, the fineness of her skin, the pureness of her contour, the tints in hair and lips and eyes, came out the more noticeably by reason of the strong light thrown upon them, and as the young man looked he saw, or fancied he saw, beyond all these, a new charm of expression. She looked animated, and he thought he might almost say happy.

It was indeed a happiness to Stella, in her vacant, arid, unsuggestive life, to come in contact with a mind that responded to her own ; and since this young man had so fortunately misunderstood the meaning of those mortifying tears shed long ago, why should she not enjoy his society as occasion offered ? As long as her pleasure in his companionship was intellectual only, there was no reason against it ; and if she should ever find there was the least danger of the lines being crossed by either of them (a thing that seemed in the region of the impossible) it would then be time enough to retreat ; for of all the perils which Stella could conjure up as among the possible calamities the future might hold for her, there was not one that she would have recoiled from in such terror as that.

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## CHAPTER VI.

DURING the weeks and months that followed, there was a good deal of intercourse between the Grays and the young men at the ranch, and not uncommonly when the weather was fine two of the young men rode over to the school-house to the morning service. Mr. Hobart and Mr. Bertrand proved to be musical, and now whenever either of them came he would take his seat quite naturally in the choir and give Stella the support of a strong voice, which was a great help and pleasure.

But Stella had had a greater pleasure almost than this in the beautiful songs which Mr. Hobart had taken the trouble to teach to her. He was an accomplished musician, and took great pains with his pupil ; and many an evening was delightfully whiled away, Hobart playing the accompaniments on the rather tuneless old piano, and sometimes joining with Stella's clear soprano his tender barytone. The young men knew the way between the two places now well enough to find it by moonlight or starlight, and although their chief had never been prevailed upon to join his juniors in their visits to Grassmere, it was known that he highly approved of them, and even encouraged the attendance of the young men at church.

"Unc. goes on the principle of the famous old Methodist preacher," Bertrand said, talking to Stella one evening on this subject, "who always told his people, 'Don't do as I do ; do as I tell you to do.' He utterly eschews the society of ladies himself, and never goes to church, but he is perfectly delighted to find that these opportunities are open to us, and insists upon our availing ourselves of them as fully as possible. He does not permit any laxity in our work ; but, on the other hand, he



sees to it that we keep up the habits of civilization as far as possible, and is the most circumspect of our party respecting table manners and such-like forms. He says he doesn't mind degenerating himself, and would comfortably give himself up to it if he didn't have us on his mind. I don't think he feels much anxiety about Hobart. He can work as hard as any of us, but he has his own way of doing everything, and is never anything but his own self, no matter what he's doing. Estcott and I often wonder what brought Hobart out here. It was all natural enough for the rest of us. It suits Unc. down to the ground, and Estcott has always been mad about sport and adventure and all that, while I, for my part, have my own reasons for wanting to make money as fast as possible and set up a house of my own, and this seemed the straightest and surest road to that end that presented itself. But Hobart had none of these reasons. I always thought he was a confirmed devotee to society and club life, and I rather wondered at it when Unc. agreed so promptly to take him in as a partner. I thought we should all regret it; but Unc. is pretty apt to know what he's about, and now we wouldn't be without him for the world. I have always fancied, however, that there was a love-affair at the back of Hobart's turning rancher, and that Unc. knew all about it; but this, of course, is only conjecture."

The young man liked nothing better than to get into long and confidential talks with Stella, and was tacitly conceded by all to be her especial friend of the three. He had long ago confided to her the details of his love-affair and his hope now of its speedy consummation, and had taken the greatest delight in the thought that "Bessie" was to have a congenial woman-friend at hand,—a thing so far beyond the expectation of either of them,—and the most cordial messages had already passed between the two young ladies. These facts put Stella's intercourse with Bertrand on a more familiar footing than the one that existed between her and the other young men, and all this led to the belief, received by every one, that Bertrand was her favorite.

With Hobart, however, there was the bond of music; and how strong and subtle a one that is, those who know will testify. Perhaps both of them found a certain amount of effort necessary to keep themselves from being more moved than either wished when they sang together. If they had been entirely uncongenial, and had never had a moment's real companionship of mind and spirit, there were certain songs they sang together that must almost necessarily have awakened sympathy, and that of a kind that had nothing to do with a similarity of intellectual tastes.

One lovely evening, when summer had given place to autumn, Hobart and Stella were together at the old piano, where they had been

going over and over a new song he had brought her. Presently he lifted his hand and closed the sheet.

"That will do for that," he said; "and now you must reward me for my instruction." And, without any further hint of his purpose, he struck a few familiar chords, and soon their voices were blending sweetly in the strains of that most sympathetic song, "I would that my love." Tenderly, wistfully, their voices lingered upon the passionate, plaintive words, and both were sad that the song should cease. In spite of this, however, its last notes had scarcely died away when Stella said, abruptly,—

"Singing enough! That will do for this evening. How warm it is!" And, with a sort of hurried air, she stepped out into the porch.

Scarcely less subtle than the music's spell were the dreamy influences of the placid twilight. As Hobart followed her and seated himself beside her on the porch, the utter stillness and serenity of the scene spread out before them, the distant murmur of the river, which could be faintly heard, the tremulous croaking of the frogs, which the distance softened almost into melody, the sleepy twitter of the little mother-birds as they hushed their broods to rest, and all the other nameless sounds and sights of a lovely country twilight, seemed to combine their forces to create in each of their hearts a feeling it was hard to deny expression to. But Hobart had learned to be very wary in his intercourse with Stella: she was so acutely sensitive, and recoiled so instinctively from any sign of the slightest breach of the cool friendliness which had now been long established between them, that he had learned how important it was that he should keep his distance. Still, they had never before been together just as now,—with the potent spell of the music mingled with the not less potent influences of the still, sweet solitude of this autumn gloaming. There came no sound of human voice or motion from the house. Every one seemed to have gone and left them quite alone.

When the silence between them had lasted so long that it seemed a necessity to break it, Hobart felt a strange reluctance to introduce any topic which should be discordant with the spell by which he felt himself encircled; and yet the suggestions that arose within him were such as he feared to utter. He was saved the necessity of making a choice, for Stella herself spoke.

"I wonder why Mr. Bertrand does not come," she said.

The topic, being so intensely unpersonal to himself, was not a very acceptable one to the young man at that moment, but suddenly he saw a way to make it serve a purpose.

"Bertrand told me he would probably be late," he said. "He

was to go first to the post-office for his letter. This is what he calls 'his day,'—as if all the others were nights; and so I suppose in a certain sense they are; and a very lucky boy he is to have one day in the seven. I admire Bertrand's way of being in love, there is something so undisguised and simple about it. You don't know what a pleasant little body Miss Parke is! I think they will make a charming couple, and would like to see the nuptials hurried up. My idea would be to build a house for the whole of us and establish the little bride as mistress, but Unc. won't hear of it. He says she must have a chance to see the difficulties in the way of housekeeping here first, and that she shall not be burdened by such responsibilities from the start: so Bertrand is to put up a cottage first, and then, if she smiles upon the notion, we may build the big house for us all afterwards. He thinks she would like it, but Unc. wouldn't even let him broach the subject to her. He says it must hold over until we have made friends with her and she with us. Her friends in New York consider her quite mad, to consent at all to share such a wild life as this with any man; but, although she is naturally a timid little thing, the strength of her attachment has put a wonderful power in her, and she is evidently prepared to face all obstacles for the sake of spending her life with the man she loves. And Bertrand will prove worthy of it all. He was always a good fellow, but his engagement has brought him out wonderfully and improved him in every way. His little sweetheart believes him to be the embodiment of goodness and wisdom, and it is really a pretty sight to watch the effect of her confidence upon him. Unc. says he wishes we were all engaged, since he sees its influence upon Bertrand. But then Bertrand is young!"

There was something in this last sentence that grated upon Stella. She couldn't bear to have the feelings and condition of this young man taken simply as the symptoms of adolescence. She wondered if there could be truth in the idea. Her own ignorance was so great that she could not decide the question; but she would not believe such a thing.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THERE was silence for another little space, which Hobart broke by murmuring half under his breath the beginning of the song they had been singing,—

"I would that my love could silently," etc.

He sang the words most tenderly, and lingered upon them as if

there were some spell about them ; and Stella, who had adopted Bertrand's notion that he had been disappointed in a love-affair before entering his present life, felt certain that he uttered those tender words now in memory of a woman he loved. She glanced across at his figure, dimly outlined in the fading light, and caught a suggestion, too, of the expression of his face, which she fancied was very sad. She had schooled herself into a habit of distrust of this man, but it contradicted her instinct, and lately she had had much ado to preserve toward him the mental attitude she had laid down for herself. Although constantly on the lookout for signs of duplicity or unreality, she had found not one, and had been obliged to decide that they existed with regard to his love-affairs only. She had heard of such cases, where men were thoroughly trustworthy in everything else. She wondered intensely now whether Mr. Hobart was unhappy,—whether any woman had treated him badly and ruined his life perhaps. Oh, what a sad thing that must be,—to have the interest and spirit taken out of everything at one blow ! She would hardly own to herself how real her conception of it was. She was thinking now only of how sorry she was for him, and how she wished he could be happy. It seemed *too* sad.

The twilight, meantime, had deepened, and the stars were coming out and faintly lighting up the sky. The stillness, too, had deepened, and they seemed more solitary than ever, sitting alone together in the calm sweetness of the quiet night.

"Miss Stella," said Hobart, presently, breaking the stillness with a voice too low and soft to sound discordant, "I've been thinking about you, and I'm almost bold enough to tell you my thoughts. Do you feel yourself in a forgiving mood, in case they should seem to you presumptuous?"

Stella could not answer immediately. It was the first time he had called her "Miss Stella" since the old days when he had treated her almost like a child, and she was, in spite of herself, moved by it. In a moment she found voice to say,—

"You may tell me your thoughts as freely as you please, Mr. Hobart. I am not likely to be angry."

Her companion was perhaps a little surprised at this, as Stella would undoubtedly have been herself, but for a most unwonted preoccupation. It was not at all the answer she would generally have made.

"I was thinking, for one thing," Hobart said, "that I would give a great deal to have some insight into the thoughts that have occupied your mind as we have been sitting here together in the twilight ; for an hour like this is apt to break through the restraints imposed by discipline, and the mind is apt to be arbitrary and follow its own bent. You, being

a person of habitual self-control, are not often betrayed into impulsive thinking, perhaps, and yet I feel that if I could penetrate the secret of the last half-hour's reflection with which your mind has been engaged, I should know you better from that revelation than from all the other intercourse we have had. All this, however, is only on the way to what I wished to say, which is this. You are making a mistake—I am certain of it—in cramping and proscribing yourself as you do. You ought to try your wings a little and go out and see the world. If you had here full employment for your energies it would be different; but it is all wrong that you should be simply stagnating through the best years of your life. I wish you would make up your mind to spend this winter in New York."

"Are these the best years of my life?" said Stella. "Do you really believe that? I always feel as if I were only living through them on the way to something else."

"That is a very delusive feeling, and may go on indefinitely, until some day you may wake to find that youth is gone, with all its possibilities, which cannot come again. Middle age and even old age may be good, but youth is the golden time, and you are letting it slip away from you as if you could recall it any moment at will. If there was work for you here,—work for head and hands and heart,—I should not speak to you in this way: the whole mistake is in the inertia of your existence. And you are not a woman to sleep through life. Sometimes I think perhaps you have dreams, and sometimes I think not. One thing, however, I know without speculation. Somewhere in this world a woman's destiny awaits you,—a destiny you have every requirement for. If ever a woman was made to bless, to purify, to sweeten, to enoble life for man, you were. I believe you would deny and controvert the idea, but your mission is to marry; and out in the great world the spirit which would emanate from you and such as you is needed by both men and women. I have a feeling that the world has need of you, Miss Stella, and that you are wrong to hide your light. I was thinking just now of what the end of it all would be if you drifted on as now; and you don't know how I recoiled at the thought of your going on through life in your present isolated, passive way, or how strongly I feel it my duty to remonstrate. And now," he said, after pausing slightly, "perhaps you are angry with me, and think I had better have held my tongue."

"I am not angry," Stella answered, in a tone that proved the truth of her words, "and I think you must be very kind, or you would not take interest enough to think out all this for my sake; but I cannot see the thing as you do. The thought of going out into the great world



and trusting myself to its tender mercies terrifies me. I have always told you I was an arrant coward ; and, besides, Mr. Hobart, it seems a little strange that you should so strongly remonstrate against my submission to a life that my circumstances have placed me in, when it is, in all essentials, the same as the life you have sought out and chosen for yourself above all others."

"There are a few strong points of difference," he said. "One is that this life gives me work to do, and employment for my hands ; but a yet stronger difference is that I have had the opportunities I think desirable for you. I have been in a position to judge of the rewards the world has to offer, and I have concluded that the best it has to give a man is work ; and in my case manual work seemed the most appropriate. I have only been here a few months, it is true, but I feel myself, for the first time in my life, anchored, and my expectation is to stay here. If you, for your part, will spend this winter in New York, and after that decide to come back and remain here, I shall question your decision no longer, but shall then regard it as an intelligent choice rather than a blind acceptance of an existence which you lack the courage to compare, by real experience, with other modes of life."

"And you have really decided on that,—to stay here always?"

"I have quite decided on it, and I do not think I shall change. I prefer it to any other life that is possible to me."

"Oh, poor fellow!" thought Stella, "he must have been shamefully treated! I suppose he never wants to run the risk of meeting the woman who has spoiled his whole life for him."

"You do not ask for explicit reasons," Hobart said, breaking in upon her thought. "I rather fancied that you might, and I had meant to tell you that if you went for the winter to New York and came back in the spring I would give them to you then. They are at my tongue's end now, but I choose to keep them back for the present. When you have seen a little more of the life in which my lot, for the most part, has been cast, I think you will better understand and enter into these reasons."

There was a moment's silence, which Hobart broke by saying,—

"I hope you give me credit for unselfishness, at least, in wanting to send you away. Don't you think it is very unselfish of me?"

"No," said Stella: "I don't believe unselfishness has anything to do with the matter. If there was the slightest reason why you should wish me to stay, I don't think you would urge me to go."

She said it as simply as possible, and gave not the faintest intimation, by manner or tone, that her heart felt slightly aggrieved,—a thing she would not have owned, even to herself, for one moment. Hobart,

however, was not so wary. His voice sounded a little hurt as he answered,—

“You misunderstand me quite——” He was about to say more, when footsteps were heard approaching, and Stella exclaimed, “Here is Mr. Bertrand at last!” and got up to greet him.

“I brought your mail also, Miss Stella,” said Bertrand. “There are some letters and papers for your father, and there is a letter for you. And, Hobart, there’s something of some sort for you, which is a good deal more than you deserve, as you never write to people. May we come inside, Miss Stella, to the lamp?”

Stella led the way, and when they had gathered around the hall table, Bertrand distributed the mail. Dr. Gray’s mail was put aside, and then Stella’s letter was handed her, and a letter and packet fell to Hobart’s share. They were both addressed in the same hand,—a female one.

“Mine is from Aunt Mamie,” said Stella, looking toward Hobart and speaking very gayly. “Suppose it should be an invitation?”

“I’m afraid you would never have the courage to own it to me if it were,” answered Hobart, smiling: “you’d have a sort of feeling that I would make you go.”

Stella broke the seal and began to read the letter, while Hobart opened his. Bertrand, meantime, had seated himself a little apart, and was eagerly perusing a letter of his own.

When Stella finished hers and looked across at Hobart, she found that his eyes, instead of being on the sheet he held before him, were fixed intently upon her.

“What news?” he said, speaking with an earnestness that his smile could not disguise.

“You would be amused,” said Stella, “and really it does seem a rather singular coincidence; for I have not heard from Aunt Mamie for an age. She is not very insistent, but the way is open for me to go, if I choose. You may see what she says.” And she handed the letter across to him. As she did so her eye fell upon the open letter in his hand.

“Shall we exchange?” said Hobart. “Not that I think you’ll find anything to interest you in my letter, though it is from a woman who is thought to have a genius for letter-writing. Do take it. I’d like you to read it, as a type of that sort of writing. It is good of its kind.”

Stella, who had refused at first, took the letter, when thus urged, and began to read it. It was written in a very dashing and beautiful hand, and in a tone of brilliant banter. The writer began by reproach-

ing Mr. Hobart for his long silence, and said he deserved to be forgotten for it, but that, although the will was not wanting, the way could not be found, and he had been cropping up in her mind so often lately, she had concluded to exorcise the evil spirit by burning a little incense at his shrine and sending him a copy of a new volume of poems, contributed by several different writers, who all wrote anonymously and who were—in one instance at least—particularly anxious to know if they could be picked out by those who ought to know them. The writer then proceeded to inquire how much longer he proposed to keep up this preposterous farce and live outside of a society and atmosphere which it was impossible for him to do without,—a thing he would be sensible to acknowledge in the beginning instead of the end,—and wound up by assuring him that if he would return to his friends and his clubs and his habitual pursuits all would be forgiven and no questions asked.

When Stella finished reading it, and looked up, she found that Mr. Hobart had again been before her, and was watching her as she read.

"What impression does a letter like that make on you, Miss Stella?" he asked. "I am curious to know."

"It is very clever," said Stella. "Who is this lady?"

"Some one you will probably meet in New York this winter, if you go, and whom you'll hear of as exceedingly intelligent and wonderfully charming. That is her reputation."

"Is she pretty?" Stella asked, and then blushed at the silliness of the question.

"Pretty is not the word. She would scorn it. Superb comes nearer the mark."

"And she writes poetry?"

"So she seems to insinuate. I propose to leave the volume of verses with you, and let you find out the poetry for me, if there is any there,—that is, if you will allow me, and if you would like to save a busy man a hard job. But now about your letter. Aunt Mamie evidently has no notion of prostrating herself further in the dust before you; but she certainly gives you the opportunity of going, if you wish to. What do you mean to do? Come outside and tell me. Never mind Bertrand: look at him, please."

The young man, forgetful of his surroundings, was lounging comfortably on the hall sofa, with his back to the light, literally devouring the manifold closely-written sheets of which his letter consisted. The expression of his face was contented in the extreme, and the eyes that scanned the sheets in his hands were very tender.

"Not that he hasn't read it once already!" Hobart said, as Stella followed his lead and stepped out into the porch. "He walked his horse, I know, for the first mile or so, and dropped the bridle on his neck; and I shouldn't wonder if he found himself lost when the last page was ended,—which may account for his being late. Unc. says we would be in danger of forgetting there is such a thing as domestic happiness in the world, and of disbelieving utterly in love's young dream, if it were not for Bertrand, and that he keeps up the tone of the ranch more than the rest of us all put together."

He turned an instant and looked over his shoulder into the hall, from whence the sound of voices now issued. Then he said, suddenly,—

"There is your father. He will look after Bertrand, and you can come with me for a little stroll. The moon must be coming up by this time, and we'll go and have a look at her."

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#### CHAPTER VIII.

STELLA wanted to rebel, but somehow she could not. There was a something in the air to-night that seemed to hold her under a spell, and Hobart had a way of speaking as if he felt he must be obeyed, which she wondered at herself for not resenting. As they stood for a moment in the light from the hall, Stella looked full at him, but, finding that her eyes were met by his, she turned away. She could not divine what his thoughts of her might be, but something—perhaps the ardent interest that animated his face—made the impression of his beauty very strong upon her just then. It was nothing but natural, Stella often said, that she should feel an admiring interest in such a handsome, elegant young man, but it would be exceedingly unnatural, so she would assure herself, that an elegant young man who had seen women as plenty as flowers in May should take more than the most casual interest in such an unpretending little creature as herself. These things she was strongly resolved to impress upon herself and bear continually in mind. She had had a salutary lesson early in life, which it behooved her to remember, and it had served its purpose well.

When Hobart and Stella had descended the steps and stood outside the house, alone in the stillness, the young man, with a bolder action than he had ever used to her before, reached out and took her hand and drew it within his arm, and guided her steps toward the river.

As they emerged from the shadow of the house, the radiant moon,

already quite far from the horizon, burst upon their sight. She scarcely showed her one day's waning, and looked still entirely round, and her full resplendent gaze seemed to fall upon the two young people tenderly. They had reached a low fence which skirted the premises on this side, and, as they paused and rested against it, Hobart said,—

"This place and all its surroundings are inexpressibly restful and lovely to me. All this stretch of fertile green country, with the long line of hills on one side and the river on the other, seems to be made for serenity and peace. As I rode over it with Bertrand when we were spying out the land, this influence possessed me so strongly that I told Unc., in describing it to him, that it was a veritable 'haven under the hill,' and I seemed to have no power to resist the gentle winds that wafted me hither. After I had seen it, I made up my mind at once to come. I thought even then that my destiny seemed to urge me to it; now I am certain of it, or, rather, what I feel now is that there was a Providence in it. I am sure that is how you would put it."

Stella made no response. She was looking downward, toward the placid little stream, across which the moon had made a path of silver.

"And yet, though I think this place so sweet," the young man went on, "I want to send you away from it. I am eager to know what your decision will be."

"You forget," said Stella, "that the question has never been agitated except in your own mind. I always knew the way was open if I chose to go, but I never did choose. Why should I then decide upon it now?"

"Because it is right; it is best: believe me, it is," he said, earnestly. "It is my solemn duty to tell you so."

"Do you wish for it so much?" she said. "What a philanthropic gentleman you are!"

"You may jest if you please, but I at least am in sober earnest. I do wish it much. I wish it intensely,—more than I have wished for anything for many a long day. I want you to go, but I also want you to come back."

His tone was very fervid as he said the last words, and the moonlight showed her that his face was fervid too.

"If I go, perhaps I shall stay," something prompted her to answer. "Perhaps I shall never come back."

"I know it," he responded; "I know perfectly how possible that is; but I want you to go. And I want you also to go soon. What I wish most is that you had been and were now returned, and that you were telling me after, instead of before, your experience of the world, that you liked this best and chose your lot here."



There was something in the young man's manner that caused Stella a feeling of genuine alarm, and for the first time in her recent intercourse with him a movement of distrust was aroused within her. His words, she knew, might mean little as well as much, but there was no mistaking the fact that he was strongly moved, or else that he wished to appear so, for Stella tried to persuade herself that she believed him only feigning. His look was concentrated and fervent, his tones were ardent; and all this was the more significant because his usual bearing toward every one was so composed and self-contained. A sudden agitating apprehension took possession of her, and she moved off in the direction of the house. When Hobart came up with her, he took her hand again and placed it in his arm with a firm movement which she felt powerless to resist, and they walked back in silence. When they reached the steps, he held her still for a moment, while he bent his eyes upon the downcast ones that would not meet them, and said, lowly,—

"If you remember how I have urged you to go away, you will, I trust, remember also how I urge you to come back. Some day my meaning may be clearer to you, but now I can only say that if you ever come to understand me in this matter you will do justice to the motives that have guided me."

Stella made no answer, but, feeling herself no longer hindered, she mounted the steps and joined Mr. Bertrand and her father in the hall, Hobart immediately declared they must be going, and in a very few moments Stella was listening to the sound of their horses' feet lessening rapidly in the distance, and reflecting that he had taken no leave of her, except to make her a formal bow in farewell.

The little package addressed to him was still upon the table, and Stella took it up and carried it off to her room.

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## CHAPTER IX.

DURING the long and restless hours in which Stella lay awake on the night that followed her conversation with Mr. Hobart recorded in the last chapter, she was agitated and disturbed almost more than she had ever been before. The more she strove to give place to the instinct which assured her that the young man was to be trusted and had spoken from the promptings of a sincere and kindly heart, the more her pride urged on her the remembrance of what had happened long ago, and this, in connection with the hints let fall by his friends as to his supposed disappointment in some recent love-affair, wrought upon her so

that, now that she was out of the presence which always inspired her with an instinctive trust, she convinced herself that Mr. Hobart had been only playing off on her some of the skilful wiles that he was wont to practise on young ladies. The fact that they were delicate and intangible made them all the more to be feared, and more than all when Stella forced herself to question her own heart did she see reason to fear herself, and before sleep came to her pillow she had so far changed her point of view that her whole mind was bent upon the thought of accepting her aunt's invitation. She could hardly wait until breakfast was over, next morning, and her father for the moment disengaged, to go to him with her aunt's letter and urge him to allow her to go to New York. To her intense relief, she found him entirely willing, and he even put no obstacle in the way of her earnest wish to go at once. He had to take a short journey by rail himself, he said, within the coming week, and he would see her started on her long one. The consideration of dress and such-like preparations offered no obstruction, as all that was to be attended to in New York, and the income from Stella's own moderate fortune, inherited from her mother, was ample for the supply of her simple requirements. She was feverishly impatient until every preliminary had been arranged, and longed to be on the way immediately, now that it was decided that she was to go.

When the letter to her aunt had been despatched, announcing her expectation to arrive in New York on a certain evening, and the few simple preparations had been set on foot and everything was put in working order for the trip, the young girl became conscious of a reluctance to leave home that was so strong that, but for the fact that her reluctance to remain there was stronger, she could never have gone. Especially she hated the thought of being separated from her father. Sad indeed is the lot of the human being who has not some one anchor to cling to in this life. Stella's anchor was her father. She felt a sort of terror in the act of cutting loose from him; but she felt also that the force that now impelled her to part from him was the stronger motive of the two. Still, as far as possible, she kept near her father during these few remaining days they were to have together, even joining him in his rides about the place and the neighborhood. He called to her one morning, when she was sewing in her room, to ask if she would not like to take a long ride with him, and when she joyfully assented he told her to get ready as quickly as possible, and in a quarter of an hour she was neatly equipped in her habit and cantering along beside him. The roads were smooth and level, and generally they rode too rapidly to talk, but when they sometimes drew rein and walked their horses for a while they fell into the pleasant chats that

both of them were always glad of an opportunity to have. The weather was bracing and inspiring, and both father and daughter were conscious of a feeling of enjoyment.

When they had performed their errand, Dr. Gray, instead of turning immediately homeward, said he had something else to see to, not over a mile farther on, and turned aside into a road that Stella did not know. She was busily talking, however, and felt no curiosity as to their destination, until she found herself close upon a group of tents, not far from which some huge buildings were in process of erection, rising out of great piles of lumber. At once it flashed across her that this was Westfields, and she knew by the direction they had come that it could be nothing else.

"Oh, papa!" she said, protestingly, "why did you bring me here?"

"I wanted to give you a little surprise, my dear," he answered. "You needn't be alarmed. All the men, except Bell, are off at work, I know, and I particularly want to see how Bell is coming on. The fact is, the old fellow is a perfect trump, and I've failed so entirely in my efforts to induce him to be sociable that it occurred to me that the ladies at my house might be the bugbears, and I thought I'd like to show him a specimen, that he might see they were not formidable. Here he is. Now make yourself as charming to him as you can. He's such an old fellow, you needn't mind."

"My daughter, Mr. Bell," he went on presently, when that gentleman, with an awkward, shuffling gait, had hurried up.

The astonished "Unc.," with an air of solemn politeness, possessed himself of the bridle of Miss Gray's horse and begged her to allow him to help her to alight; but Stella, who had keen instincts as well as keen eyes, somehow divined that he considered her distinctly out of place and gave her small thanks for coming.

"I had rather not get down, papa," she said, half timidly. "I don't mind waiting, and I suppose you won't be long."

"The fact is, Stella has fallen unwittingly into a little trap I set for her," said Dr. Gray. "She simply agreed to accompany me on a ride, not knowing where I was going, and I found myself so near you that I thought I would not let the opportunity pass of seeing how my remedies had acted."

This put a new face upon the matter, and, now that it appeared that the young lady had been the subject of an amiable imposition, and that her father had perhaps an insufficient understanding of the delicacy of her feelings, she became the object of real instead of pretended solicitation on the part of her host.

"Miss Gray must by no means refuse the hospitalities of West-fields," he said. "We have a large debt to repay on that score; and although all three of my partners are absent, I should fare ill at their hands on their return if I failed to do the honors, to the best of my ability, to such welcome guests."

Stella felt it would be ungracious to refuse his invitation further, and let him assist her to dismount, after which she gathered up her habit and followed him into the principal tent, which was fitted up apparently for dining-room and sitting-room. As her eyes wandered around its walls, she was much amazed at the convenience and completeness of the camping-out equipments with which the ranchers had provided themselves. "Unc.," as she found herself instinctively thinking of him, was not dressed, like the others, in prairie costume: indeed, she could scarcely imagine him so jauntily apparelled. He wore a rough gray suit, a good deal the worse for wear, with the regulation trousers and a sack-coat, and showed a certain slovenliness of attire that contrasted strikingly with the scrupulous neatness of the other three gentlemen. He was ugly, too,—though far from disagreeable-looking,—and had a manner that was at once awkward and kind. His face was strong and his bearing polite, and he was evidently a gentleman, but not what is called, in the jargon of the day, "a swell."

"Miss Gray must by all means have some refreshment after her drive," said Mr. Bell. "What is it ladies like? A cup of tea, isn't it? Our cook is just at present pressed into service elsewhere, so I shall have to make it."

He produced a little tea-service, of a kind at once pretty and serviceable, and, lighting the spirit-lamp, set the water to boil, and placed the tea-caddy in readiness. Then he insisted that the horses must be watered and fed, and excused himself to go and see to it. It was so unmistakably a pleasure to him to perform these hospitable acts that both Dr. Gray and his daughter had too much tact to forbid them. As soon as they were left alone, the father said,—

"Now's my chance to get in a word professionally. It requires some manœuvring to doctor this fellow, and I always have to get my information incidentally. He looks a vast deal better under my treatment, and I mean to keep it up. I shall tell him you are glad of a little quiet rest after your long ride, and shall keep him out awhile and try to find out what he needs further. He was getting into a poor state of health; and he's not a man to be easily spared."

"He's just an old dear," said Stella, warmly. "I was provoked with you at first, papa, for bringing me here, but I don't mind him any more than if he were an old woman, and I'm so glad I've met him."

No sooner did Miss Gray find herself alone in the tent than she rose and walked over to the rude mantel-shelf, above which there was an object which she had been conscious of ever since her entrance, but which she had until now avoided looking at directly. It was the photograph of Hobart that Bertrand had described to her, and underneath, as he had said, was scrawled the inscription "Cow-boy Charley." A radiant smile of pure amusement overspread the young girl's face as she looked from the writing to the card. If ever a man looked as if he were fitted by nature to circumstances of luxury and ease, assuredly the young gentleman before her looked it, to the last detail of person and costume. And yet Stella Gray smiled again when she remembered how his prairie dress seemed also to suit him, for the image in her mind was no less admirable and attractive than the one just now before her eyes. As she stood gazing at the picture, a gentle hissing sound caught her ear, and she discovered that the teakettle was boiling. Drawing off her gloves, with a smile of amusement, she proceeded to make the tea, and just as she was pouring the steaming water into the pot, her head on one side and her slim body in a charming poise, she looked up, attracted by a sudden sound, and saw Charles Hobart standing in the door of the tent and gazing at her intently.

"Am I dreaming?" he said, as if half under his breath, standing motionless as if afraid to break the spell. Then he smiled and began to sing softly the refrain of one of the songs he had taught to her:

"Is this a dream? Then waking would be pain.  
Oh, do not wake me. Let me dream again."

Stella blushed rosy red under his intent gaze and burst into a little half-frightened laugh.

"You were supposed to be at the antipodes," she began.

"So I was," he put in. "I've been for many a day at the antipodes of such a scene as this. I didn't have an idea that a tent could, all in a minute, turn into a home, and I assure you it's a most bewildering transformation-scene. Oh, if you knew how tired I am," he added, coming into the tent and throwing himself upon the lounge, "and how I long for a cup of that tea!"

You have already some idea of what an unconventional young lady was Miss Stella Gray. All her delicacy was in instinct, not training, and there was no instinct within her now that offered the slightest opposition to her pouring Mr. Hobart a cup of tea and carrying it over to him, with a merry unembarrassed smile.

"If you looked into that chest you would find some crackers," Hobart said, in an appealing tone, as if he hardly dared to hope she



would do it ; but Stella laughed gayly, and tripped away, holding up her habit in one hand, and presently returned with the crackers on a small plate. She shoved the table a little nearer to him, and set the plate down at his elbow.

"And now," said Hobart, "if you would make yourself a cup of tea and come and sit down and drink it with me, I should say you were quite the best little woman in the world."

Stella tripped away again, and began to pour another cup of tea. She had not forgotten that she was going away. Indeed, it was because she vividly remembered it that she abandoned herself now to the full enjoyment of this little episode. She saw that Hobart was enjoying it, and, although he would forget it by to-morrow (according to her fancy that the parts played by women in his life were the very slightest of all his impressions), it would be a pleasant memory to take with her into the barren waste of worldliness to which she was going. As to what Mr. Bell might think, if he should happen to come in upon this free-and-easy course of things, that embarrassment was never even suggested to her mind ; nor did it occur to her to feel any qualms concerning Hobart's opinion, and, if it had, she must have felt how useless these would be.

When she brought her cup of tea, and seated herself on a folding chair that stood near Hobart's lounge, her first glance at him showed her that his eyes were closed.

"Have you gone to sleep, Mr. Hobart?" she said, the smile on her face sounding in her merry voice.

"I'm so glad you spoke to me," he said, opening his eyes and looking full upon her. "I don't know what made me shut my eyes, unless it was a sort of feeling that the dream would last longer if I paid it that tribute ; and then I was afraid to open them, lest I should see the home shifted off and the tent restored. But here you are, sitting opposite, drinking your tea with me quite sociably, and ready to give me another cup by and by, and it's no dream at all ! You won't catch me so much as winking again. I shall not give you that much chance to be whisked away ; for I have seen no sign of how you got here, and I suppose the fairies must have brought you."

"You may harbor that delusion if it pleases your fancy," she replied, "but I cannot prevent your having a substantial proof of my manner of exit, for here comes papa, with Mr. Bell, and we must soon be going."

The two gentlemen were surprised, but they showed and had no other feeling, when they found Hobart quietly sipping his tea with Stella. The young man explained that one of the wagons had broken

down, and, as he had been able to get it only as far as the blacksmith's shop, and it could not be ready to use until next morning, he had been obliged to take a half-holiday, and had ridden home.

"Just fancy my emotions, when I got here tired and worried, to find a ministering spirit with a rejuvenating potion in her hand ready mixed for me! I have taken it, and am another man. Try its effect, doctor. Let me hand you a cup. And, Unc., now you do as I tell you: sit right down on that stool, and let Miss Gray mix and administer it to you. It will give you a new sensation, which reaches farther than a new prescription, even though the latter may be of our good doctor's own composing."

It was pretty to see the young girl, with a merry appreciation of the joke, anticipating and meeting all the wants of the overpowered gentleman who was in reality old enough to be her father, and whom she evidently regarded in the light (never grateful to bachelorhood of any degree) of an amiable old man. First he must have a more comfortable seat, and change to this one which she placed nearer the table; then his cup must be rinsed with hot water, to insure the tea's being hot; then he must by no means mix it for himself, but let her do it, with a due regard to the correct order of sugar, tea, and cream; then more crackers must be brought for him from the chest; and, in conclusion, he mustn't say "If you please" and "Thank you," but just drink his tea and be comfortable.

When the two elders had been established at the table, with their frugal repast before them,—to which Dr. Gray refused to allow anything else to be added,—Stella was reminded that the agreeable little episode was almost over, by her father's looking at his watch and saying that they must mount as soon as he had finished his tea.

"Then mine must be the privilege of getting your horses," Hobart said. "Would Miss Gray care to come with me and have a look at our stables? They are more imposing than the frugality of our residence might lead one to suppose."

Besides the predominating motive, which need not be described, the young man had a secondary one in making this proposition, which consisted in the reflection that poor old Unc. would inevitably miss the flavor of his cup of tea, if he did not indeed choke himself with it, unless the disconcerting vision of that radiant young maiden's presence were removed. It was an unwonted sight to Unc., and the young fellow thought it hardly wonderful that it should threaten to turn his head.

When Mr. Hobart and Miss Gray had turned their backs upon the tent and were walking off toward the stables, both of them felt that the little comedy was played out and reality had returned. Stella, for her

part, was reflecting that she must tell him she was going to New York, while he, for his, had almost forgotten the existence of the metropolis and his recent anxiety that Stella should visit it. As Stella accompanied him through the great buildings and inspected all their arrangements, which were on a scale so much grander than any she had ever seen before, New York and all its liabilities and accompaniments seemed farther off than ever and more unwelcome to her memory. Her own little horse, which seemed rather restive in its strange stall, recognized her and gave a whinny of delight as she came near, pricking up its delicate ears and pawing impatiently. All the hands being away at work, Mr. Hobart had to saddle and bridle it himself, and, as Stella stood by, the animal rubbed its head affectionately against her, while its young mistress responded by caresses and endearing words.

"I really think Lorna will miss me when I'm gone," she said. "She's the most loving little soul imaginable, and I know she will wonder that I stay away from her so long. Don't you believe animals do wonder?"

"Are you really going away?" said Hobart, taking no notice of her question, and looking up at her quickly as he was buckling the girth.

"Yes, I'm really going," she answered. "I have acted according to your advice, you see!"

"So you have," he answered, his eyes bent now upon his work. "And how long do you suppose you'll stay?"

"Oh, quite indefinitely," said Stella. "Papa advises all the winter. He seems to think, with you, that it is a more fitting sphere for me. I hope your combined wisdom may effect a happy result upon my future."

"Why do you go, if you don't want to?" said Hobart, impetuously. "Why should you be overruled by the judgment of others, when it is a case you can best decide upon yourself? I said I thought you would be wise to go; but I don't know. I suppose you have been guided by your own lights heretofore, and Heaven knows they have led you better than mine have led me. Perhaps I gave you bad advice. Is it because of what I said that you are going?"

Stella shook her head.

"No," she said: "I want to go. I didn't at first; but I do now. I begged papa to consent to it."

"And it is now definitely settled?"

"Quite. I have written to Aunt Mamie to meet me."

"And when do you leave?"

"On Monday."

"Well, I've got my wish sooner than I expected; and yet so un-

reasonable are we mortals that—do you know?—I am not glad you are going. I am even very sorry. You thought Lorna would miss you. Have you ever cared enough about it to think how it will be with me?"

Stella's heart was beating oppressively, but she had a consciousness within her which was a complete armor against such darts as these. She called to her aid all her pride as she answered, carelessly,—

"I cannot conscientiously say that I have, Mr. Hobart. My own family and Lorna have had the monopoly of my solicitude in that regard, with the exception of a small remnant of my Sunday-school class."

"You are not kind when you speak like that, Miss Gray; and when you are not kind I always think you are not sincere. However, although I accept my snubbing, there is a grain of comfort in it. Your family, Lorna, and the Sunday-school class are likely to remain *in statu quo*, and you'll have to come back to them; for I fancy the sense of being strongly needed would act powerfully upon a nature such as yours. Would it not?"

There was something almost solemnly earnest in his manner and tone as he said this, and Stella dared not meet his eyes. She was toying tenderly with Lorna's mane, and kept her gaze fixed there.

("What an adroit flatterer he is!" she said to herself, disdainfully. "Practice makes perfect, I suppose! Many a silly girl—such as one I can recall—has been taken in by words and tones like these, and he no doubt counts upon their serving his purpose now. If so, a surprise awaits him!")

"Just at present," she answered, laughingly, "I am most strongly needed by papa, who is, no doubt, wondering at my delaying so. Come, Lorna, we are going home." And, turning, she left the stable, while Hobart led the horse out by the door that led directly from the stall. When he came up to where she stood awaiting him, she said,—

"I don't see any place to mount. Is a city man up to our country custom of offering a lady his hand for the purpose?"

Her tone was light and her manner gay, but Hobart looked grave.

"I am not a city man," he said,—“the imputation sounds unjust to me already,—but here's my hand, Miss Gray, for any purpose by which it can render you a service."

He held out his strong right hand, browned and somewhat hardened now, and Stella put her little foot in it and vaulted lightly into her saddle. Lorna capered a little when she felt her young lady's weight upon her back once more, but Hobart offered no assistance and expressed no alarm. He somehow seemed to feel that Lorna was more her friend

than he, and that she trusted herself more willingly to the fiery little animal, who showed indeed a wonderful responsiveness to her gentle tones and touches.

They turned toward the tent in silence, Stella walking her horse, so that Hobart easily kept pace. He *must* indeed be tired and overworked, she thought, for his face, as she now glanced at it furtively, looked careworn and clouded.

"Miss Gray," he said, suddenly, when they had almost reached the tent, "if I should write to you after you've been gone awhile, should you be angry?"

Stella's heart said no, and bade her own how welcome such a letter would be, so far away, but Stella's pride dictated a very different response, and Stella's lips said, coldly,—

"Write to me? For what? I can't imagine what you could have to say."

When Hobart opened his lips to speak, a moment later, it was not in answer to Miss Gray; but to call out to her father, who now emerged from the tent, that his horse was all ready in the stable and he would bring him up immediately. Both of them, in their preoccupation, had forgotten the good doctor and his horse.

When Hobart came rapidly up, a few moments later, leading the doctor's horse, his manner had changed. The seriousness had given place to a more formal bearing, perfectly self-possessed and also perfectly cordial. He thanked them both for the pleasure their visit had given, asked the day of the month (a matter as to which he avowed himself now habitually in 'the dark'), declaring that he would like to mark it with a white stone, if he could form any idea of the character of the process, asked Stella if she would not leave some tangible token of her presence behind her, that they might have some hope of inducing Estcott and Bertrand to believe them when they told their partners what had happened, and was altogether so easy and gay that the girl felt almost hurt, and resented his manner so far as to turn rather grave herself. Even Unc. seemed very loath to part with her, and asked her if she never meant to come again.

"Angels' visits are few and far between," said Hobart. "Miss Gray perhaps means hers to be unique. Luckily for us, however, one such visit may prompt a thousand memories; and until we have forgotten that she has been with us and lightened our darkness and sat under our shelter and made our tea and mingled her smiles and glances with it, her presence will seem to linger round us still, and Unc. and I will be in a position to accord the deepest pity to the loneliness of Estcott and Bertrand."



Dr. Gray had shaken hands with both men cordially, and was mounting his horse, when Stella held out her hand to Mr. Bell, and said, almost timidly,—

"I am going away for a long time, Mr. Bell, to see my aunt in New York. Good-by."

There was a sort of appealingness in her tone that might have seemed singular to the man she addressed, but for the fact that he considered everything a woman did that, and only took this along with the rest. Hobart, however, heard that little tender tone, and wondered what it meant. Was she less callous than she wished to seem? and did she perhaps want to feel that she would be kindly remembered by some of those she left behind? It might be so; and, please Heaven, she should never want a solace or a joy that he could give her! So when she had taken leave of Unc. he came up beside her and took her hand a moment and said, most gently,—

"Good-by, Miss Stella. We will never forget you for this visit, if you should never think of us again. If the New-Yorkers do not treat you as they should, remember Unc. and me, and what a welcome awaits you in the haven under the hill."

He smiled as he ended, and dropped her hand; but as Stella caught a last glimpse of him before Lorna bounded away, as he stood with his handsome head bared and his eyes uplifted, the grave look had returned, and with it an expression that made her think of what he had said about her responding to another's earnest need.

But she could not tolerate that thought. It weakened her purpose for the future and unsettled everything in the present: so, by way of stilling the insistent memory, she invited her father to a rapid gallop, and under the influence of Lorna's swiftest speed the disturbing spirit was subdued.

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## CHAPTER X.

"You *are* the oddest girl," said Mrs. Lacy, emphatically, addressing her niece Miss Gray, a few mornings after the latter's arrival in New York, as the two ladies sat together in a cosey morning-room. The weather was cold, and an open fire blazed cheerfully in the grate. "All these years, in which I have been begging and beseeching you to come across from that barren waste and stay with me, you have seemed wedded to that desolate existence, and now no sooner is the desolation removed by the arrival of four agreeable gentlemen than you turn your back upon them and bethink yourself of your aunt's despised

hospitality! I can tell you it isn't every day in the week that such a quartet as that is got together, even in New York. Mr. Bell, whose people I know, has the reputation of being rather a crusty old creature, but very clever, and a gentleman, and I believe also a scholar. Archy Bertrand, though engaged, and very much engaged, would always be companionable to an attractive young lady; while Estcott, being of an excellent family and a marriageable age, with money enough and brains enough to make him worth considering, would have been rather an interesting neighbor for most young ladies. And as to Mr. Hobart——"

Mrs. Lacy paused, while Stella waited with concealed eagerness.

"Well," she said, presently, "what about Mr. Hobart?"

"My child, you are simply too ignorant to appreciate Charles Hobart; and that is the only excuse for your indifference about him. The most fastidious circles of New York, as well as those of every other city where he has been known, delight to honor Charles Hobart, and feel his society a privilege. He is so talented, so clever, so delightful in conversation, that he used to be the very life of the select small dinners we used to have when he was here, and his appearance is so handsome and so far more than handsome that it was a pleasure to watch him in a ball-room even after he gave up dancing. Oh, and then he was such a treasure at the sea-shore, and such a jewel in the quieter and more difficult relations of private intercourse, and people liked him so immensely and favored and spoiled him so boundlessly; and what did it all come to? He calmly took himself off to the barrenness and obscurity of those Western wilds, not even taking leave of his friends, except a favored few, of whom I was one, to whom he wrote short notes of farewell, saying nothing of the probable duration of his absence, and omitting, either from accident or intention, even to give his address! I think it was very ungrateful, though he spoke in the sweetest way of his appreciation of my kindness to him, and I know he felt every word of it, for he *has* a heart, in spite of all his enemies and even his friends may say to the contrary."

"Mr. Bertrand told me," said Stella, after there had been a little pause between them, "that he had an idea that some disappointment in a love-affair was at the bottom of his embracing his present life."

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Mrs. Lacy. "The idea has suggested itself to me as a possible solution of the mystery; but if it's so, his friends in New York know nothing of it, and I can't see that any one more than forty others among his lady friends has grieved for him especially. Still, he's not the man to expose his feelings to the public gaze, or to care about a woman who would do so either: so there the

mystery rests. One thing, by the way, I will say, in the way of prediction: after you have gone through a season in New York and seen the best it has to offer in the matter of the masculine element, you will go back home with an appreciation of the supreme charm of your next-door neighbor which you never had before. I'd venture a good deal on that."

"Well, wouldn't that be a happy state of affairs?" said Stella, lightly. "It is always a fortunate thing to be satisfied with one's surroundings."

"I can't fancy Charles Hobart in that life," Mrs. Lacy went on, musingly. "How does he look? What does he wear?"

"He looks extremely well and healthy, though he is considerably bronzed," said Stella, "and he wears, for example, a blue flannel shirt and knee-breeches, with long blue yarn stockings and low-cut shoes, and what is called a Tam O'Shanter cap, or Scotch bonnet."

"What a beauty he must look!" said Mrs. Lacy, enthusiastically. "I hadn't thought of him in that costume, and his figure is so straight and strong that it would suit him perfectly."

"I don't know about his being a beauty," said Stella, feeling resentful at the term, "but he certainly looks uncommonly well in his prairie dress; and you've no idea how he works!"

"Works, indeed!" said Mrs. Lacy, scornfully. "Doing the part of an Irish laborer! I've no patience with such folly! But come; we are wasting our time in discussing that benighted young man. We must dress and go out. The dress-maker must be hurried with your work, for several invitations have already come that I mean you to accept; and since you've chosen to turn your back upon such attractions at home, I must try and make it up to you."

The acceptance of the invitations alluded to introduced Miss Gray to many new acquaintances and opened before her an ever-widening perspective of entertainments and new friends which bade fair to occupy her attention to the last moment and give full employment to her energies and interests. Among all the people whom she met, however, there was only one who seemed likely to become her warm and familiar friend; and this was Mr. Bertrand's little *fiancée*, Miss Bessie Parke. She had called upon Stella promptly, and the two girls had found so much to talk about, having been both primed for each other beforehand by the young man who was the ardent lover of one and the ardent friend of the other, that they never wearied of each other's society, and, as Stella soon confided to Miss Parke, she found nothing so delightful and joy-giving in all her experience of New York as the charming ready-made friend who was prepared at once to enter into all

her interests and pursuits. Miss Parke's engagement was so well known that there were no aspirants to her favor in other than a friendly light, but of these there were many, as she was just the sort of sweet, amiable, warm-hearted, restful little creature to be friends with everybody. It seemed possible now, from the encouraging tone of Bertrand's recent letters, that they might be able to afford to be married in the spring; and, if so, they would be neighbors very soon.

"Do you think you will like the life?" said Stella. "It is very isolated and monotonous, and I don't believe you can have an idea of it beforehand."

"Do I think I shall like it?" said Miss Parke, opening her eyes very wide and laughing brightly. "Oh, you innocent Stella! Shan't I have my dear boy with me all the time? and shan't we be all the more to each other by reason of our isolation from other society? and shan't I find employment for all my time and all my energy in making his home cheerful and sweet and pretty for him, and beguiling his leisure hours with books and talks and house-decorating and every sort of delightful thing which several lives could hardly suffice for! Oh, Stella, you haven't an idea what it is to care for any one as I do for him and as he does for me; and as for doubting whether I should like the life or not, with Archy with me, why, I should have no doubt about Sahara as a place of residence under the circumstances, if we were secure of an umbrella to hold over our heads and an occasional sip of water. I shouldn't dare to talk in this way to any one but you, for fear I'd be called an idiot; but you know, I hope, that it is in reality the soundest sense. Don't you believe it?"

"Yes," said Stella, gravely, "you and Mr. Bertrand seem to me about the wisest as well as the happiest people that I know."

There was undoubtedly a tinge of sadness in her tones, and a certain something in her manner that Bessie had perceived before and did not quite understand. It seemed very dreary to this sympathetic young creature that there should be any one in the world outside of the happy valley that love had made for Bertrand and herself, and she put her tender arms about the rather stately maiden standing before her and said, wistfully,—

"Oh, Stella dear, I wish you and somebody could be as happy as Archy and I. It seems almost wicked for us to monopolize it all; and so few people are very happy: don't you think so?"

"Not many, I think, in the way that you and Mr. Bertrand are."

"But there *is* no other way," cried Bessie, ardently: "everything else is the merest sham." And she ran on into a long exposition of the views held by her lover and herself, which would probably prove

less interesting to the reader than it did to the ardent young girl who listened eagerly, though still with that undefined seriousness, to it all.

"Oh, Bessie," she said, at the close of their interview, "do let me give you one piece of advice. Marry just as soon as you can, dear, and never mind about arrangements."

"As if we would!" said Bessie, scornfully. "Arrangements, indeed! Papa requires—and Archy would be unwilling not to give—a voucher for his ability to supply bread and butter for the future; and now that he has put his capital into a safe investment, with the likelihood of its making him a fair return and giving him congenial employment, we are perfectly happy."

"You are a lucky little woman," said her friend, "and Mr. Bertrand is a lucky man; and, what's more, both you and he deserve it all. But such happiness as yours is not for everybody." And with these words she rose to go, for the occasion of this conversation had been a morning visit made by Stella to her new friend.

Mrs. Lacy was a great favorite in society, which owed her indeed a good deal for the frequency and variety of her efforts in its behalf, in the shape of entertainments of various kinds. Her house was a popular one, and her friends were legion. As a consequence of all this, Mrs. Lacy's young guest was the object of much attention in society, which would have been the case, to some extent, if her personal attractions had been small. As they were, however, the reverse of small, in reality, and as Stella generally rewarded by her own personal graces the attention bestowed upon her for her aunt's sake, and as many people who were unmoved by that consideration were attracted and enchained by the young girl's beauty and charm, she soon became one of the most popular figures in society, and, as a consequence, was frequently an admired subject of the observation of that ever-expanding social evil, the newspaper correspondent. As newspapers were almost the only messengers from the outside world that found their way to the solitude of Westfields, they were usually read by one or another of the four men rather exhaustively, and various were the items concerning the beautiful and much-admired Miss Gray which were read out around that distant camp-fire. Unc. invariably received these announcements with marked interest, and would remark that it was not often that popular taste rested upon such a good foundation, or express the hope that those foolish people would not turn the pretty little creature's head, alternating with a candid avowal of his satisfaction that she was getting the admiration that she deserved, etc. Bertrand delighted in it all, being more kindly disposed toward Miss Gray than ever, since his little sweetheart's letters had described enthusiastically their growing inti-



macy ; while Estcott, who was rather more outside the subject than the others, expressed his pleasure in the fact that Miss Gray seemed to be enjoying herself so much, but rather wondered that she should be called a beauty. Mr. Estcott himself was a very small and slender man, and admired nothing so much in women as muscle and adipose, and Stella's alim loveliness was very far from his ideal. Hobart alone of the four men was non-committal, usually receiving these reports and opinions concerning Miss Gray in a silence that his three friends interpreted each after his kind. Bertrand, who always felt himself in a position of having to reach up to Hobart's level in most things, fancied he might possibly be restrained by the reflection that the subject was almost too delicate a one to be discussed, however respectfully, by four men around a camp-fire ; while Estcott was of the opinion that Hobart's standard being difficult, Miss Gray fell short of it, though he did not care to say so, and Unc., for his part, sought for the reason deeper yet, and kept an unusually watchful eye on his favorite partner, suspicious, but by no means convinced, as to his almost marked reserve in regard to Miss Gray and her attractions.

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## CHAPTER XI

ONE day the papers brought the news of a great fancy-dress ball given by Mrs. Lacy in honor of her young guest, and of course the costume and appearance of the recognized star of the occasion were described at length. She had appeared in the character of Undine, and her costume, designed by her aunt, was given in all its bewildering details of water-green draperies, with sea-weed simulated by trailing Southern moss, and ornamentation of pearls and pink coral and tiny shells. Hobart read the description to himself before the others had seen the papers, and found himself wondering whether it had been written by a woman or a man. The minuteness of detail as to costume seemed to suggest the former, but the enthusiasm of tone where the young girl's personal grace and beauty were touched upon seemed to point to the latter inference. At all events, he did not like it. For a man to discuss so publicly a subject so sacred seemed to merit a punishment nothing short of castigation, and even from a woman it was indelicate and utterly out of taste. What right had he to feel so strongly about it ? None, he told himself over and over again, and less than none ! Why did papers print such rubbish ? and why, above all, was he fool enough to read it, and even scan every column to look for it ? And what effect would it all have on Stella,—modest, gentle,

womanly Stella, who was not to be spoken of except with reverent breath and delicate thought? Why did he urge her to go to New York? and what might they not make of her there, among them all? There were men and women spoken of in the very same article, who had been invited by the hostess to meet and know her niece, whom it made Hobart hot to think of as coming near to dear, tender, modest little Stella. How would they talk to her, and what would Stella think of their talk? Oh to have her back again, here in the solitude and safety of her own distant home, with the sewing to be done for her little brothers her chiefest care, and her father and step-mother and the Sunday-school children and his three partners and Lorna and himself as all her world! Would she ever care for that world again?—or would she be spoiled for it? Would she come back with her natural and healthy appetite for the simple pleasures of her country life quite dulled and blunted, and with a craving for the stimulating influences of her recent exciting existence? Well, suppose she should! Who was to be thanked for it? Had he not urged her to go, and had he not thought chiefly of himself in doing so? His motive had been one that he had thought fine at the time,—a feeling that it would be unfair for him to take advantage of the girl's ignorance and inexperience by giving way to the alluring voices that were forever urging him to allow himself to love this sweet woman and win her love in return. He was used to easy victories over the feelings of women, and he was afraid of the very power within him, and dared not permit himself to take one single step. In this case, it is true, he had felt less confidence in himself than he had ever felt before, but surely, surely he might have won her! She who was all loveliness and sweetness would surely be amenable to the voice of love, and, oh, what wondrous things he could tell her about what their lives might be together,—things he had never even thought of in his inmost soul before! And what a need he had of her, and of her influence on his life! That had been dimly in his mind when he had told her he knew that appeal would be a strong one to her. Oh, it was maddening to reflect that, possibly, but for his own folly Stella might be near him now, instead of so far, far away both in spirit and in body, and she might be perhaps already his, wooed and won, instead of what she seemed now, a distant and constantly-obscured star. And yet, on the other hand, her staying might have wrought him only wretchedness and disappointment, for he had received but scant encouragement to go further when he had occasionally made the slightest advances to her; and when he had asked her, at parting, in a way any woman would understand, whether he might write to her, her manner had been careless and hard. A woman who was even

capable of learning to love him could scarcely have treated him in just that way, he thought. And so it was, confused and saddening and uncertain, the only positive thing in it all being that he loved her, and that he missed her and longed for her so that life was not life without her!

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## CHAPTER XII.

WHETHER it was due to the fact of Mrs. Lacy's popularity, or Miss Gray's personal attractions, or the usual zest of society for novelty, or a mixture of these three elements, certain it is that Stella became a very prominent figure in society, and was extolled by the newspapers so generally, for the attributes and accomplishments she did not possess as well as those she did, that information concerning her movements and the admiration she excited was not lacking to the far-distant friends at Westfields.

It may seem a little strange that of the four gentlemen there the one who manifested the greatest delight and interest in reading these accounts was the usually imperturbable Unc. He even evinced a sense of proprietorship in the object of all this adulation, and was wont to herald his readings from the newspapers on this subject with such remarks as, "Here's something more about our little lady!" or, "Who do you suppose heads the list of the figures described at the Charity Ball as most admired for their beauty and costume? Why, no other than our little lady herself, in a costume said to beggar description!"

A close observer—had such an individual been loitering about Westfields, where the gentlemen had gone into winter quarters, with monstrous wood fires, around which they gathered, to talk and read and smoke, when the toils of day were over—would possibly have noticed that Unc. had some choice as to his audience when he read these extracts and made these observations. His auditors might be more or less than the three partners, but one thing was essential,—Hobart must be of the number. But then Hobart was given up to be Unc.'s pet and favorite of them all, and that was perhaps sufficient explanation. The same mail that brought the paper containing the account of Stella's appearance at the Charity Ball brought also to Bertrand a long letter from his little *fiancée*, giving her own account of the matter, and describing Stella with a warmth of feeling that not even the newspaper correspondent's pen could equal. Unc., who was the confidant (in the absence of the female element in their lives) of all three of the young men, was favored by Bertrand with the reading of the less personal por-

tions of this letter, in which were contained the references to Stella. "She was the loveliest thing I ever looked at, in her white and gold costume," wrote the ardent little Bessie, "and people were raving over her, and half the men present quite crazy to dance with her. I hardly ventured to claim her attention at first, as she was so surrounded, and stood at a distance for a while, watching her. I was with papa, who admires her as much almost as I do, and presently she spied us and came over to where we were, taking the first arm that was offered to her, without seeming to notice whose it was, as she has such a way of doing. I never saw anything like her indifference to men. It happened that some one had stepped on my dress and torn it, and when Stella came up I was lamenting it, and she insisted on going to the dressing-room to fasten it up. I did not want to take her away; but she will always do as she chooses, and would go with me. When we got to the dressing-room, it was empty, and Stella went to work at once and fixed my dress for me, and when it was done I begged her to go back, as so many people would be wanting her in the ball-room; but, instead of complying, she put her hands on my shoulders and looked at me intently and said no, there was nobody in the ball-room, or anywhere else for that matter, that really wanted her, and then asked when I had heard from you, and why we didn't make haste with our wedding, and began to talk about Westfields, and her own home, and how lovely the country was, and said somebody had called it once 'the haven under the hill,' and that was how she always thought of it; and I noticed, when she said this, that the tears sprang to her eyes, and she told me that when I drifted out of the wild tempestuous life of New York into that blessed place of rest I would be so happy and would understand perhaps why it was that she loved it so much; and then I asked her why she didn't go back to it, if she was happier there, and when her visit was to end, and she said she couldn't go back, and that maybe she never would, but all the same I was the luckiest girl on earth, with the life I had cut out before me, and she should have no patience with me if I delayed my marriage, for things were so uncertain, and something might happen, and talked on so strangely that I am almost sure she is not happy. I have often suspected it, but I can get no clue to the truth. She threw her arms around me suddenly and kissed me, and I thought she was going to cry, but she drew herself away and went off with the gentleman who had been waiting for her outside; and when I saw her next, she was looking so lovely and serene, and people were watching her with such admiration, and I'm sure no one there but me had any idea she was not enjoying all the attention she received; but I knew that, for some reason, she had no

heart for it. What can the reason be? Can you help me to guess it? Her mind is preoccupied, and she only tries to enter into the life here, and cannot succeed."

When Bertrand finished reading this long extract to Unc., the latter made no comment, except to say that if he ever proved himself unworthy of the nice girl who wrote him such letters he'd have to answer for it to him, and then fell to a discussion of the plans for the cottage, which it was now settled was to be put up as soon as spring opened, for the occupancy of the bride; and this topic proved so absorbing that Bertrand soon forgot the subordinate matter of Miss Stella Gray's eccentric state of mind. With Unc., however, it was very different. The subject lingered in his thoughts and would not be dismissed; and when Bertrand and Estcott had gone off that night to have a conference with some of the hands as to some work that was to be done on the morrow, and he and Hobart sat around the big blazing fire, it seemed to take entire possession of him. He was smoking a short pipe, and puffing away serenely, as his eyes rested scrutinizingly on Hobart's face. Hobart, who was not smoking, sat gazing intently into the fire with relaxed features, and that absolute unconsciousness of self which is only possible when in the company of one who is entirely trusted. To be with Unc. was to Hobart almost like being alone, so far as any need of restraint was concerned.

"Hobart," said Unc., presently, taking his pipe from his lips and speaking with such quietness that his companion felt so little disturbed that he did not even move the direction of his eyes, "what do you think you'll do about renewing when your first year's time is out?"

Hobart turned a sudden, penetrating glance upon him, and said, rather sharply,—

"What's put it into your head to ask me that? The year isn't up for some time yet, and there's plenty of time to come to a decision."

"Oh, certainly," said Unc., "there's time enough. I only thought perhaps you *had* been thinking of it, and that maybe you'd want to sell out, as of course you've a right to do."

"Can you possibly tell me what has put that notion into your head?"

"The idea that it was in yours, I reckon," answered Unc., puffing away placidly at his pipe.

"And what made you think it was in mine?" said Hobart, in a more trenchant tone than he had ever used to Unc. before, within the latter's recollection.

"The fact that you have lost heart in your work."

Unc. was, after all, rather a soft-hearted old soul, and he now, in his turn, bent his gaze upon the fire, with a wish to avoid meeting



Hobart's look, since he had a feeling that it might not be as kind as usual.

"Who says I've lost heart in my work?" said Hobart, in a tone so keen that Unc. felt glad he had looked away from him.

"Nobody says so but me," retorted Unc. "I don't know that the others have noticed it, but it's so plain to me that I don't think you'll deny it. I thought you were going to turn out a first-rate man of business and show you had the grit I always believed was in you, but you've broken down early."

"I haven't broken down at all," said Hobart, indignantly. "If I've neglected my work in any particular, I'd like you to tell me when it was."

"Oh, I don't say that," said Unc., mildly: "you've done your full share of the work; but how? I'd rather you'd left it alone. You work as though it were a hard task, and not as you used to work; and, whatever the other fellows may feel about it, I don't like any such half-hearted doings around me."

The younger man's brows contracted into an angry frown.

"You'll excuse me for saying, Bell," he answered, "that your opinions as to the manner in which I do my work are quite apart from the subject, so long as I take my share of the business, which you cannot accuse me of not doing, and your over-critical expressions in the matter seem to me hardly warrantable."

When had one of his own boys called him "Bell" before? It seemed odd to the old fellow, and almost painful,—especially to come from his pet boy of them all! He took no notice of it, however, but smoked on in silence for a few moments, and then he said,—

"Bertrand's marriage, of course, will make some difference. That's got to come off as soon as possible. There's no reason why it should not be in May. Such a girl as that is not going to mind enduring a few hardships, or indeed a good many, for the sake of the man she loves. We'll all have to bend our powers to get a shanty knocked up for them as soon as possible, and we must try to make it look as pretty as we can; but a space enclosed is all some women want to make a home. It makes me think of that time the doctor's little daughter made tea in our tent. I wish you could have seen how you two looked when I first caught sight of you! You had been tired out, you recollect, and had thrown yourself down on the lounge, and she had brought you your tea, and was sitting down by you, drinking hers, and looking as sweet as any flower, and talking to you; and it's mighty pretty to think that's how Bertrand and his little sweetheart'll be, year in and year out."

A host of varying emotions had passed across Hobart's face while Unc. was speaking, not one of which had escaped the notice of the seemingly unobservant smoker, who had drawn into the shadow, where he could not well be seen; and when the speaker ceased, a look that Unc. plainly saw to be artificial settled on the face of the younger man, as he answered, in a superficial, half-cynical tone,—

"Exceedingly pretty, theoretically; but, for my part, I am aghast at Bertrand's boldness. Fancy expecting any woman who has had any experience whatever of the luxuries and comforts, to say nothing of the enjoyments, of New York life, to settle down to such an isolated, monotonous existence as we are living here, and continue to be happy in it! As soon as the novelty wore off,—and I'd give her from spring until winter for that,—she would inevitably detest it and cry to be remanded to civilization; and no one could blame her if she did. I only hope Bertrand will be prepared for spending next winter in New York; for I make a prediction that that's where he'll spend it."

"If he does, it will be of his own choice, then," retorted Unc., "for this girl, I'm inclined to believe, loves him very unselfishly, and would be willing and happy to live anywhere with him, for the sake of being together. I'm not too crusty an old bachelor to believe in the existence of women such as that. But, apart from all this, you make a mistake in supposing this life is necessarily repulsive to a woman. Look at the doctor's little girl. Was any bird in the trees ever happier than she, in her home life here?"

His eyes were watching keenly every sign in Hobart's face, and he did not fail to detect a change that passed across it as he uttered those last words.

"Granted," answered Hobart, composedly; "but that was the bliss of ignorance. Now that she knows something of the enticements of the world, and has been the object of the world's delightful adulations, it's quite a different matter; and so, I fancy, you'll find out."

"On the contrary," returned Unc., puffing at his pipe and speaking with the utmost composure and deliberation, "she doesn't like New York, and isn't happy there, and her heart turns so wistfully back to the far-off home and friends that she pauses in the midst of the excitements of the most brilliant ball of the season, of which she is one of the most brilliant features, to think tenderly of those she has left behind, and to speak out the voice of her heart and say the lot she conceives to be the happiest is a little home with a loved companion in a region she names, with tears in her lovely eyes, as 'the haven under the hill.'"

The speaker had proceeded to the end deliberately, with no inter-

ruption of the tranquil style of his narration, though no shade of the ever-increasing excitement and wonder of his companion's face had escaped his watchful eyes; but when he ended with the mention of the name by which Hobart himself had described that region of country, the young man's face expressed such absolute bewilderment that he seemed scarcely in possession of his rational senses.

"Where did you learn all this?" he said. "I must be dreaming."

"I rather think you are, my boy," said Unc., gently. "A man who sees before him the possibility of securing such a prize as this, and has not the courage to go through thick and thin to grasp it, but quietly abandons the field to other competitors, who are sure to be many and ardent, while he sits passive at home, must, I think, indeed be dreaming. It makes one wonder whether he deserves it, or whether he really desires it."

"Oh, Unc., dear, dear old Unc.," said Hobart, eagerly, striding across to him and putting both hands upon his shoulders, while he bent his fervid eyes upon his friend's kind face, "how have you found my secret out? What has given you this supernatural insight? I willingly bare my heart before you, and own to all the passionate love I feel; but of her you can know nothing: you must be only guessing when you say she is not happy, and thinks of us and home, in the midst of her brilliant existence there. Dear, good old Unc., don't keep me in suspense, but tell me what you know and what you suspect."

"I know," said Unc., kindly, "that you love this gentle girl with all your heart,—a heart I know to be a big and noble one,—and I know it is a sort of love to stand this hard world's wear and tear, though it has been resisted strongly and hardly owned to your own soul, even yet. I knew all, the day I found you in the tent together, and I think that was the day you knew it first yourself."

He paused, and looked intently into his friend's excited face, and, though there was no answer to his look in words, the wondering corroboration of the eyes that met his gaze gave all the assent he needed.

"So much for what I know," he said. "What I suspect is that that gentle Stella, though perhaps she loves you not as yet, might still be won to do so. At one time I am sure it might have been; but that was before you had coldly stood aside and let her go away without so much as reaching out a hand to stop her. That is a thing, I fancy, which a woman, whose heart is even vibrating toward a possible dawning love, would not very readily forgive; and I don't say your way will be smooth and easy: I only say it seems to me a thing worth bearing hardness for. For the rest,—as to the girl's wistful turning

toward the thought of home, even in the gayest of the scenes by which she is surrounded, and as to her speaking of it, with tearful eyes, in the language I have quoted, that is not suspicion, but knowledge."

He drew his friend down to a seat beside him then, and told him as accurately as he could all that Bessie Parke had said in her letter to Bertrand; and before the two men parted for the night it had been agreed that Hobart was to set out for New York within the week.

"But all must be done warily and gently, my boy," said Unc. "We may both be doomed to disappointment; for I should feel it, in my own way, too, if she denied you; and I have a notion, in that case, the little thing would never want it known, even by us, for fear we might judge her harshly: so not a soul besides myself must guess the object of your journey."

"I am sure you are right," said Hobart, "but I don't see how it can be managed."

"Leave it to me," answered Unc. "I'll set the ball in motion. Some of us ought to go on, in the course of time, to see about a lot of new machinery and other things, before the summer season opens. It would seem as if Bertrand ought to be the one selected; but he, we all know, has an object in saving all he can, and his time for going, anyhow, is not so far away: so I'll just say to Estcott and him that I know you wouldn't mind undertaking the matter, and of course the money wouldn't count to you; and I think that'll pave the way and take the edge off the surprise of your going immediately."

"Dear, good, faithful old Unc.!" said Hobart, tenderly; "and to think that not half an hour ago I called you 'Bell' and felt quite angry with you! Will you forgive me, old fellow, and try to understand that it was only because I am not, never was, and never can be worthy of your friendship? Suppose it all turns out well! Suppose the bewildering vision of happiness that rises before me should be realized! What would I not owe to your affection and your wisdom, and how could I ever repay it?"

"Ah, well," said Unc., smiling, "by proxy, perhaps, if you felt yourself in person unworthy. A smile from a certain little lady, and perhaps a word of thanks, would go far; and I fancy a place by your fireside occasionally, and a kindly welcome by a sweet young woman such as that, who had made happy the friend whose happiness is almost the most cherished wish of life to me, would not leave in my heart much sense of undischarged obligation on your part. You don't know what it is, Hobart, to look at happiness entirely from an outside view. It's been many a day since I have seen it any other way; but a man who loves another man as I love you has reason to thank his God

for much. It keeps the heart unembittered, and the fountains of being, in some sense, pure; and in the end, old fellow, I shouldn't wonder if my debt to you is greater than yours to me. I want you to remember this, and bear in mind that if your mission to New York fails—as fail it may—you've got old Unc. to take into consideration, and you mustn't forget how much he counts on you, and that if he saw you giving up it would be a shock he couldn't stand. It almost frightens me to think of what you have at stake." He paused a moment, and then went on in a lowered tone: "It was just the same with me once, long ago, and I lost. As I say, it was long ago; but from that day to this I have never felt I could have anything to lose again, until now I come to think about what it would be to me to see your life the awful blank that mine was when that blow came. I think if I had had a friend that loved me as I love you it mightn't have been quite so hard; and I want you, whatever happens, to remember that there's one affection in this earth that cannot fail you."

Hobart, deeply moved, was listening to this timidly-uttered confidence with all the reverence and sensibility he would have felt at a young maiden's confession of a first and tender love. Even in such a moment as the present was in his own life, he forgot himself and his passionate hopes and fears, to ask, almost in a whisper, while his heart beat loud and his voice trembled,—

"Where is she, Unc.? Living or dead?"

"Living," he answered, in a steady voice, although his tone was low, as if from reverence. "She is married to a good man, who loves her, and she has sons and daughters growing up around her. I have never seen her since, and I never expect to see her again, but I feel this world to be a better place because she lives in it, and please God it may treat her kindly and she may live a happy life and die in the peace of God and man, as she deserves!"

"Oh, Unc.," said Hobart, fervently, "tell me a little more,—just this. Does she know anything of what your life has been? Has she the least idea what an incentive she has been to you, and how your whole existence has been one long act of self-forgetfulness? I know now, what I have sometimes wondered, where the inspiration of your thoughts and deeds has come from, and I cannot help feeling that, somehow, she too ought to know."

"She knows nothing about me," he replied. "I have sometimes wondered if she remembers me, even, and I cannot be sure, though I hope she does, or would if any one should utter my name before her. But she has not so much reason to remember me as you suppose, for what I felt for her I never told her, and I don't think she ever even



suspected. It had come upon me like a flash the first time I ever saw her, and had grown and strengthened every day. There was a little while in which I believed she might return my feeling, and during that time I was happy,—enough so, I have often thought, to put up willingly with what came after; but then the man came in her way whom she afterwards married, and I saw then clearly enough that any hope of mine had been vain; for she was not—as I had thought possible—of a nature to conceal her feelings, and her interest in him was very plain almost from the first; and when he asked her, as he soon did, to marry him, she was not long in making up her mind. That is why I trust for you, my boy, that your happiness may not be long in coming. I believe she will know her mind. But here come Bertrand and Estcott,” he said, as footsteps were heard. “You may leave all necessary arrangements to me. I think I can make it all seem to come about naturally. God bless you, my boy! I think you will get the happiness you deserve.”

The two men clasped hands fervently, and Hobart returned to his place, and when Bertrand and Estcott entered they found both so exactly as they had left them that no suspicion that anything more than the usual quiet talk had taken place in their absence ever crossed the young men's minds.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

IT was a long journey from Westfields to New York, and ample time was afforded by it for the manifold changes of mood which are apt to beset a man whose mind is absorbed in the consciousness that one of the most important issues of his life is before him. It was even more than this to Hobart, for he held this to be superlatively the important issue of his life; and before he reached his journey's end, the high hope with which he had set out had given place to the most painful misgivings. The more he thought about the little scene with Stella which Miss Parke had described to Bertrand, the more he perceived that it was capable of a general and indefinite as well as a special and particular interpretation. True, it proved convincingly that Miss Gray had not found entire content and satisfaction in her present experiences, and was, at times at least, possessed by the sense of their insufficiency; but that might be only a passing mood, and how could he tell that he, with all his love, had the power to make her happy? Perhaps—he *would* force himself to face that possibility—the unrest in her heart was due to some all-potent spell in which he had no part! It was

overwhelming to him to think of how natural that would be. With her beauty, her goodness, her supreme sweetness, she was born to awaken love, and other men besides himself must have loved her, and it might be that when she had spoken in that strange way to her friend that night she had been in that self-contradictory state that belongs peculiarly to the moment in which one heart is drawing near, in tremulous and wondering approach, to another heart that is coming to meet it. Hobart could understand how that state of mind might be mistaken, even by itself, for unhappiness, and he felt that there was deep significance of some sort in the words that Stella had spoken that night. By the time he reached New York his spirits had ebbed so low that he was ready to wish himself back at Westfields, and but for his dread of Unc.'s reproaches he felt almost sure he would have gone. It did seem so preposterous for him to suppose that Stella—radiant, beautiful, incomparable Stella, whom all men must do homage to—should have kept herself for him, or should even be in a state of mind and feeling to make it possible that he could win her.

He felt already like a stranger in New York, as he drove to his hotel and dressed and dined. The few casual acquaintances he met were not on such terms with him as even to have missed him, and they nodded to him or shook hands carelessly as if they had seen him yesterday. One man detained him to say, "Haven't seen you for a month of Sundays!" but was too engrossed with some end he had in view to wait for any explanation of the fact, and the world appeared to be getting on so well without him that there seemed no place for him in it. He thought half longingly of the rest and quiet of Westfields, but at the same time the place seemed changed to him now, and he felt that if Stella denied him he could never go near it again. Would she deny him? Possibly, conceivably, by some blissful, wonderful chance, she might not; and a gleam of delicious hope shot up in his heart. At all events, there was but one thing to do,—and hesitation would be unmanly,—"to put it to the touch and win or lose it all."

After dinner, which he took rather early, he went out for a walk, thinking he would drop in at the club, but caring little for the people he should meet there. I wish I could show him to you, reader, as he took his way along the familiar streets, making one of a fashionable-looking crowd, among which he felt himself such an alien, but in which he looked, in bearing and dress and manner, so fine a representative that civilization and its garments and observances seemed justified by such as he. He looked wonderfully the same, however, as in his prairie costume, being of that class of people whose individualism is at all times paramount in effect to their accessories and surroundings.

On the avenue he met with several friends who had known him well enough to miss him and gave him a cordial greeting, but he was strangely preoccupied and disinclined to talk. His Western life of regularity and activity had freshened him wonderfully, and one of his friends told him he looked ten years younger and vowed he had roses in his cheeks,—a slander on the healthy pallor of his skin, from which the summer's sun-burn had not quite worn off.

"I am younger," he answered, smiling, "by much more than ten years, too, for that would put me at twenty-five, and I feel sixteen as compared to such an old fellow as you,—though we used to be the same age, I believe."

The man he addressed was named Harvey, and when both had been younger he had rather contested with Hobart the honor of being the foremost figure in their special set,—a circumstance they both laughed at in more recent years, though the old feeling still obtained so far that Harvey had a consciousness of being more exclusively looked up to by the *jeunesse dorée* since Hobart had gone away. Still, he was glad to see him back, and gave him a hearty greeting.

"You're just in time for Mrs. Tremaine's grand blow-out," he said. "I'll mention to her that you are in town, as I am on my way there now. I suppose a card sent to the club would reach you?"

"Yes, thank you very much," said Hobart. "You are very kind to bestow your noble patronage upon an errant cow-boy, and he appreciates it, I assure you. I'm out of the way of balls, however, and am not sure I could screw myself up to the point. When is it to be?"

"To-night," returned his friend; "and as for not going, why, that's simple nonsense. You needn't stay it out, unless you choose; but don't leave until you've seen the new beauty that is stirring us to the centre just at present. She's a niece of Mrs. Lacy's, and a perfect gem." With these words Mr. Harvey hurried away.

The next object upon which Hobart turned his somewhat absent gaze was a handsome carriage, drawn up to the side-walk, and he suddenly perceived that the livery worn by the coachman and footman was familiar. He had just time to recognize the Lacys' equipage, when the footman sprang to the ground to throw open the carriage door for a lady who was descending the steps of the house before which the carriage stood. He was some little distance off, and his motions seemed to drag, instead of quickening, as his eyes rested on a vision of a tall young lady, in a gorgeous costume of dark velvet and fur, with a sweeping train caught up in a rich mass by a daintily-gloved hand, as two delicate little feet bore her down the steps and across the pavement to the carriage, into which she stepped and was rapidly whirled away.

"The new beauty! Mrs. Lacy's guest!" reflected Hobart, as he walked along, keeping his eyes upon the carriage which was lessening in the distance. "At least there is no access of self-consciousness about her,—not so much as a look to the right or the left, to see who was near by, to observe her sumptuous beauty! If she had seen me, would she have looked glad, I wonder? For she *didn't* look glad: a change would have had to come. Oh, Unc., dear old fellow, I fear we're a couple of fools; and I had better have borne my loneliness, as you have done!"

"Why, Mr. Hobart! Where on earth did you come from? How awfully nice to see you! How awfully well you look!"

These enthusiastic exclamations were uttered by a pair of trim-looking, stylish young ladies, who broke in suddenly upon Mr. Hobart's reflections and showed such genuine pleasure in meeting him that it made an appeal to his kindness of heart which he could not resist. So he turned and walked with them half a square or so, to the door of a house where they were going to call. Even in that short distance the all-important topic of the ball was introduced, supplemented by a mention of the beautiful Miss Gray, whose name seemed to be on everybody's lips. Somehow it made the young man seem very lonely, as he turned and retraced his steps, and the thought that Stella could possibly care for him seemed every moment more presumptuous. He was marvellously humbled by the discipline of his recent experiences, and he questioned himself wonderingly as to where his old self-confidence was gone.

Perhaps it might have been to some degree restored if he could have seen the effect produced by the announcement made by the two young ladies with whom he had just parted upon the group of ladies assembled informally at afternoon tea.

"Charles Hobart! Dear me! what a piece of luck!" said the hostess. "A man worth taking the trouble to talk to is such a rarity in society now. And has he come to stay? and will he be at Mrs. Tremaine's? Did you ask him?"

The speaker was one of the leaders of the literary society of the city, and had been recognized as the author of the most admired verses contributed by the ladies of her circle to a volume of anonymous poems published not long since. She made no ineffectual attempts at being considered young, but affected instead the maturer charm of developed intelligence and taste, which she honestly deemed to be infinitely the more potent. She had always shown a great appreciation of Hobart, and no one doubted the sincerity of her present expressions of delight at his return. Others besides herself of the ladies assembled in her drawing-room that afternoon felt an added interest in the ball by reason

of Hobart's expected presence there, and the fact could not have been disputed that he had been cordially remembered by many friends in his old home, in spite of the absorbing interests from which he had chosen to exclude himself.

As the young man walked along, now and then exchanging greetings with acquaintances, and dropped in awhile at the club, where his welcome was certainly cordial, as such things go, he felt all the time as if he were getting farther and farther away from Stella, and the fact that he had actually seen her would have seemed a baseless fancy, had it not been for the accelerated beating of his heart every time he recalled the impression of that lovely vision; for Stella in her furs and velvets was not less beautiful than Stella in her short blue flannel and kerchief. Indeed, to his starved eyes she seemed even more so.

But how was he to overcome this sense of distance? Why not go to Mrs. Lacy's at once and ask for her, in the hope that she was now returned and would receive him? But he reflected that she had been visiting, and was going to a ball that night, and he fancied Mrs. Lacy would see that she spent as much as possible of her afternoon in resting, for Mrs. Lacy would be much concerned that she should look her best that night: he was sure of that. Besides, he rather preferred to be so situated as to be able to observe Stella first from a distance, that he might form a more definite idea of what her thoughts and state of mind might be, for he had learned to believe in his power to read her face, in the days gone by.

But when the evening hours put him in possession of a card to Mrs. Tremaine's ball, accompanied by a scrawling line insisting on his presence, he felt the strongest hesitation about going, and sat in his room and smoked and ruminated until his mood, in process of time, reacted on him, and he felt so ashamed of his timidity that he got up resolutely and began to dress for the ball.

When he had finished, the mirror showed to him a figure we have already seen materialized in the old photograph that hangs at West-fields,—a figure so well made and elegant that the severe costume it wears seems only to enhance its charm, while its attitudes in movement and its bearing in repose seem to have acquired a wonderful new-born grace, to be accounted for, in part, by the stronger healthfulness of his physical frame, as well as by a less material influence that has made its impress chiefly in the expression of his face.



## CHAPTER XIV.

IF Hobart felt indeed any sense of timidity as he threaded his way through the thronged apartments at Mrs. Tremaine's that evening, he showed no signs of it. He came late, after the dancing had been some time in progress, and most of the men present were put to some disadvantage by the freshness of his new-made toilet, to say nothing of the distinguished personal charm which his old friends said among themselves was more marked than ever.

"Yes, he's handsomer than ever, if anything," said Mrs. Tremaine, to whom he had been talking for the first five minutes of his presence at the ball, and whom he had now left to speak to an old lady, with white hair and a cap, who had recognized him with delight and beckoned him to her side, exclaiming, as he reached her,—

"Charley Hobart, you dear fellow! What a treat to my old eyes! You don't know how I've had you on my mind! I couldn't hear where or why you were gone, and I've been tormenting myself for fear you were in some trouble or danger, and here you are, looking as a man might look who had been taking a holiday in Arcadia. No need to ask you how you are!" And the old lady, who had known him since he was a baby, showed such evident joy in seeing him again that the young fellow's heart warmed up and he seemed to feel it a sort of omen that Stella would be propitious.

And where, all this time, is Stella? There she is,—not dancing, but sitting in the full light of the great ball-room chandelier, on a sofa with Bessie Parke, whom she has summoned to a seat beside her, and who is doing her best to meet the requirements of the situation, which involve rather more fluency of speech than she can readily command—for she is naturally shy and reserved—to bear even a minor part in the task of entertaining so many young gentlemen as have gathered around the sofa.

Stella has changed her furs and velvets for a pure-white costume, neither elaborate nor splendid. The texture, which is wonderfully fine and soft, is too dense and dull for silk, and too light for velvet. It seems as if its existence might have been inspired by the demands of Stella's gentle, tender, womanly beauty, whose most distinctive trait is simplicity. Her gown, in this case, has been of her own selecting, Mrs. Lacy having allowed herself to be overruled. The neck and arms, entirely without ornament, are bare, and the fine lace which edges her pointed bodice looks creamy against their fairness. Her hair, drawn off her face in the old simple way, with only its rough curliness to

break the severe outline of her head, is in the same close knot behind, and but for the lengthened skirts from which her dainty little feet peep out in front, while they sweep away in a flowing train behind, and the manner of wont and usage with which she is accepting the homage paid her, she might seem the same girlish, ignorant little Stella who lives so tenderly cherished in Hobart's loving heart.

If it was clear that she had grown accustomed to being an object of attention and interest to others, it was quite as clear, even to Hobart's jealous eyes, that her consciousness of this fact had not detracted from her naturalness, which was as marked as ever. Indeed, it was the more marked by reason of the contrast to those about her. It was no wonder, perhaps, that Miss Gray was so often said by ladies to be odd. Certainly she looked absolutely different from any one now within range of comparison with her.

Hobart had first caught sight of her while talking to old Mrs. Lawrence, and ever since his heart had been going first fast and then slow, with such an agitating tumult that he felt his breath come half stiflingly, although he gave no outward sign and listened with apparent interest to the old lady's garrulousness, even murmuring a word in response now and then, as he waited for Stella to see him. But Stella, who was inexperienced in the far-reaching habit of vision which characterizes most acknowledged beauties, confined her attention to those nearest her, giving a great part of it to the little friend at her side, whose shyness she kept in mind. So Hobart, although he scarcely moved his eyes from her face, and was near enough to be instantly recognized if she had looked that way, found the moments slipping by without a sign for him, and felt, somehow, almost as far away from her as ever.

"Oh, here you are at last!" cried a familiar voice in his ear, and, turning, he saw Harvey coming toward him. "I've been looking for you everywhere. I want to take you around and show you the lions. —Don't you think he ought to be very grateful to me, Mrs. Lawrence? You know he's become a confirmed rustic, living on a ranch in the West; though I will say his appearance, for a cow-boy, isn't bad," he ended, good-naturedly, evidently yielding a willing tribute to his friend. "You'll excuse him, won't you, Mrs. Lawrence? I want to present him to Miss Gray. She's from the West, or somewhere out there, herself, by the way, and perhaps I shall win a somewhat higher degree of her favor than I've been able to secure heretofore if I introduce this rustic to her notice. She doesn't seem over-delighted with any of us New York men, and the secret may be hid in the fact that she has a predisposition to cow-boy society."

He was rattling on in the mere spirit of nonsense, but a moment later he had reason to be surprised at the unconsciously prophetic nature of his words. When he came up to where Stella sat, and said, suddenly, "Miss Gray, will you let me present my friend Mr. Hobart?" a rush of color such as he had never before seen in Stella's placid cheeks came bounding into her face, and she started to her feet in animated surprise, as Hobart said, quietly,—

"So glad to meet you, Miss Gray," taking her hand and smiling, while his manner explained to every one present the fact that he and Miss Gray were old acquaintances. He was in reality not less stirred than Stella at this meeting, and when his eyes encountered hers, and their hands touched, the bounding of his pulses warned him that he would need to be very wary if no one was to suspect his feeling. He had the advantage of previous preparation on his side, besides long social training, and so, although there had been a little gleam in Stella's eyes at seeing him which seemed as much like joy as surprise, and delicious thoughts of happiness had been set astir within him, he felt the necessity of diverting the attention of those about him from Stella's evident agitation and putting their intercourse on a perfectly natural basis.

"Miss Gray and I are next-door neighbors," he said, smiling, "or so we call ourselves in spite of the miles that separate her residence from mine.—I have news from home for you, Miss Gray, if you'll come away somewhere apart from this noise and hear it. That is," he said, with a sudden doubt in his voice, "unless you want to dance."

At this there was a general laugh.

"Next-door neighbors in your country must keep themselves very ill informed of each other's doings, if you don't happen to know what we've all ascertained to our cost,—that Miss Gray doesn't dance," said Mr. Harvey.

"There has never been any occasion of my obtaining the information," answered Hobart. "We don't have balls.—Will you come with me, Miss Gray, or shall I keep my tidings until to-morrow, when there will not be so many demands upon your attention?"

"I will come now," said Stella; and when he offered his arm she put hers within it and they walked away.

What a wonderful thing it seemed to both of them to be together in this strange new world, so utterly unlike the scene of their last experiences! And yet how natural! Many an eye followed them as they walked down the long room and into the hall beyond; and indeed it was no wonder, for they were a goodly pair to look upon. Sweet, tall, lovely Stella,—how beautiful she looked in her long white robe, and how

truly her own simple self, in spite of all changes of time and scene! Hobart, now that he found himself alone with her, could keep down no longer the hungry longing of his heart, and as he closed the door of the room behind them, he laid his right hand upon the little trembling one within his arm, and bent his eyes upon her with a regard so fervid and intense that it required all her force—all the memory of the childish self-betrayal which rankled in her spirit yet—to keep her from looking up and showing him the secret of her heart in her eyes.

The music and the hurrying sounds of the dancers' feet came to them faintly here. That closed door seemed to shut them in another world, which was bewilderingly sweet, but of which she was afraid. But now to the tender touch and the potent presence there was added a sweet caressing sound, and a voice that she loved to hear—whether she chose to own it to her heart or not—said, lowly,—

“Stella!”

Her heart throbbed, and she trembled; but once before this man had conquered her by the subtle influences of his tone and touch, and she remembered that time, and kept her lids lowered, and would answer him by neither word nor sign.

“Stella,” he said, again, “my life has been miserable for the lack of you. I have come all this way to speak to you,—just to tell you that I love you with every fibre of my heart, and to ask for your love in return.”

Still there was no answer. A long breath that seemed to tremble through her shook her frame, and he knew that she was agitated and disturbed, but whether he might dare to soothe and comfort her he could not tell. A moment's breathless stillness followed, and then he loosed her hands, and, reverently touching her fair face with a hand that was tremulous too, he forced her to look up at him, and when once he had read the tender message of those sweet uplifted eyes he knew it all, and that his happiness was come to him!

Silently, tenderly, he strained her to his heart, and bent his head to kiss away two overwelling tears that trembled on her lids.

“If I had claimed you long ago, my Stella,” he said, lowly, “and had kissed away the tears that rose for me in the lovely eyes of a dear young girl who once came very near to caring for me four whole years ago, I should have been truer to the dictates of my heart. When I think of how I love you now, it would be false to say I loved you then; but none the less those tearful eyes, uplifted to me in a tremulous affection inexplicable to your own young heart, marked an epoch in my life, and kept my heart free for the entrance of the real true love when it came to me, all unexpectedly, four years after. This is

what I have been burning to tell you, darling one. Surely, now that you love me really, we may talk about that far-away time and be glad together over it. Stella, are you glad for what you let me see then?—that I had the power to move and agitate you? Surely you will be when I tell you that the only two beings who have ever had the power to touch *my* heart, since first I looked upon your lovely face, were the girl Stella of four years ago and the woman Stella of to-day. Look at me, my Stella, and tell me, are you glad?"

Stella raised her eyes and looked at him, as she was bidden, and those eyes said, as plainly as any words, "I am glad indeed."

"Oh, but how I have suffered!" said Stella's voice, presently, low and tremulous, in her lover's ear. "I never dreamed that this could come,—that you would love me indeed!"

"But the wonderful part is that my beautiful Stella loves me. You have said it, Stella, with your true, true eyes! An hour ago I was almost ready to start off to the ends of the earth, never to return. I could never have borne the sight of the places we have known together."

"Oh, Mr. Hobart," said Stella, with a sudden eagerness that made her voice sound half frightened, "I feel as if this could not last,—as if in a moment I must waken from a lovely dream,—and I want to make haste and tell you——" but her voice faltered, and she stopped.

"Go on, Stella; go on. I am longing to hear you," the young man whispered. "What is it you want to say?"

"That I think you are good and dear and noble above all men alive,—that I have thought so always, though I did my best to stifle the voice within me; but now that is too little to say. Before the lovely dream is broken, I want to tell you that I love you with my whole, whole heart."

He drew her close to his breast, and held her there a moment, safe and still. It did not seem a time for speech, and the only words that broke the holy silence were a fervent, low "God bless you!"

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## CHAPTER XV.

SUMMER has come again; not the summer of houses and cities and crowded streets, but the summer of green fields and blooming flowers and open skies and singing birds. The world is fair to look upon, in its gayly-tinted summer dress, and the sounds that linger in the still, mild air—ripple of waters and song of birds and distant lowing of cattle—are sweet to hear.



Surely nowhere in all the land are sights more lovely or sounds more sweet than here, in this placid country-side, far away from the turmoil and strife of the crowded marts of men. It is a spot familiar to you, reader, and if you remember the face of nature here you will remember too the man and woman who stand together on the threshold of a snug new house with clambering vines and plenitude of flowers, although you see them in far different guise from that in which you saw them last. The man, in his suit of blue flannel, made in the rustic style that advanced civilization now decrees to be the most elegant as well, has summoned to his side a gentle creature, clad in a simple short white dress, with a kerchief around the throat, and the two stand together on the vine-draped porch and look abroad upon the emerald fields and sapphire skies, with the river on one side and the long low hill on the other, that form the setting of their home. The structure included in that name is still a new one, in which they have been domesticated only recently, but Hobart and Stella have lived and moved in the thought of it ever since the night of Mrs. Tremaine's ball. Vast was Mrs. Lacy's amazement when Stella told her of her engagement, and to this day she persists in the opinion that, charming and pretty as the girl undeniably is, her having won the heart of such a man as Hobart was an immense advance on anything she had ever expected from her. But then everybody, with perhaps one exception, knows that Mrs. Lacy has always had an overweening estimate of Mr. Hobart's attractions.

"I often think," says Hobart, smiling, as he puts his arm about his wife's waist and draws her to his side, "how the sentiments we have uttered all our lives as the merest truisms, without any special understanding of them, become so replete with wisdom and discrimination when the significance of their application to our own lives is felt. What commonplace words they used to seem to me when I heard people say, 'There's no place like home,' and how little I understood that they expressed the absolute truth that all the kingdoms of the earth are worthless in comparison! And I never should have known it, Stella, but for you, who are my home; for without you our dear little house would be but a structure of timber, instead of what it is."

Stella, who looks wonderfully girlish in her simple dress, draws a little closer to him and gives no articulate answer. All around them are the peaceful influences of a tranquil summer evening, and her happy spirit seems to partake of this content.

"I often think I am too happy, living my life out hour by hour with you," said Stella.

"And sometimes I fear I am too selfish, keeping you so wholly to

myself," replied her husband; "and then I think of the flourishing state of the Sunday-school, and of the class of boys who are so preternaturally ignorant that they know a little less even than their new teacher himself,—and of the pleasure your good father finds in coming to our fireside, and the comfort my Stella manages to bestow upon mamma and the boys just of a kind that is needed,—and of the advantages we confer upon our nearest neighbors over the hill, and, above all, of dear old Unc.; and it seems to me that I do not quite absorb my Stella's wonderful capacity for bestowing comfort and joy, since all of these, in some sense, share it with me. And *à propos* of all this, by way of being a little diffusive in the present moment, suppose we ride over and see Bertrand and Mrs. Bessie, and leave Unc. to keep house for us."

The proposition was joyfully accepted, and in a little while young Mrs. Hobart came out equipped in a charming new riding-habit, made with a sensible short skirt that was never in the way, and, tripping down the steps, she put her foot in her husband's hand, the action being accompanied by a look of mutual consciousness which made them both smile gayly, and sprang lightly upon her horse's back. This horse was no other than our old friend Lorna; and as Stella patted her and spoke to her caressingly, while her husband was mounting, the pretty animal arched her neck and curvetted with such a plain indication of pleasure in these endearments that Hobart said, smilingly,—

"Even Lorna comes under your happy spell, you beneficent witch! I don't know that I care about your being the least bit more diffusive than you are!"

What a glorious canter they had over the springy turf! and how glad Bertrand and Bessie and Estcott were to see them! For after "the Hobarts" marked Unc. for their own, "the Bertrands" took pity on the other benighted bachelor and made him welcome beneath their roof, and the business went on prosperously with the quadruple partnership unbroken. And what a delicious ride home they had in the deepening twilight, through which they dawdled and lingered like a pair of lovers as they were! And how pleasant it was to see the joy in dear old Unc.'s face as he came out to greet them and help the little wife to alight!—a privilege Hobart stood aside to allow. Unc. was positively wearing a very presentable suit of clothes, though still of his own style and cut, and his hair was quite smooth. Indeed, there was a general air of physical and mental well-being that was different from the Unc. of old. He never failed now to amble along, after his more deliberate mode of progress, in the wake of Mr. and Mrs. Hobart when they went to church on Sundays, and he had been the principal mover

in the enterprise of getting a resident clergyman, as well as the most liberal contributor to the church that was soon to be erected near the site of the old school-house. So Stella mused in her heart with thankful joy on the happy change in Unc., and loved to think it had a spiritual no less than a mental and a moral side.

"Have we kept you waiting, Unc.?" she said, brightly, as she sprang to the ground, supported by his strong hand. "Tea will be ready very soon, and I'll promise you an extra good one to-night, to reward your patience."

The little cap and whip and gloves were thrown aside, and Stella, still in her short habit, flitted about the cosy dining-room, assisting and supervising her rather inefficient little waitress, while the two men, in the deepening twilight, sat on the porch and watched her moving here and there, in the light, within the room. Her hair, rougher than usual from the contact of her cap, stood out lightly around the outline of her head, and the light from the lamp shone through it in a way that suggested to her husband the idea of a nimbus. It was too foolish a thought to be uttered, and he kept it to himself, but the suggestion was due perhaps more to the prompting of his heart than to his vision; for to him this radiant, pure, and lovely being seemed to partake of the nature of angels more than of men. None but a human being, however, could have brewed such a cup of tea, and ordered and administered such an appetizing little supper, as she presently summoned them to partake of. When it was over, and the busy housekeeper's duties were done for the night, and Unc. had gone off to have a quiet smoke by himself, Stella came out to her husband in the porch. He threw his cigar away and rose as she approached him. The night was a lovely one, and the tranquil scene stretched out before them was bathed in a flood of moonlight. They had a fashion, at such times as these, of pacing up and down together as they talked, and now Hobart put his arm about her waist, and up and down, up and down, they walked, from one end to the other of the long porch, talking in tender low-toned words of all the quiet, humdrum interests of their simple lives. But the love that burned within their hearts made glorious to them every common thing, and lifted the every-day trivialities of life into the regions of high thinking which in this instance, as in so many others, went hand in hand with plain living.

"I expected so much in my married life," said Hobart, as they paused at one end of the porch, leaning against the railing and looking out across the lovely moonlighted fields, "that almost any one would have told me I would have to be in some measure disappointed. It would have made no difference; for, in spite of all, I should have

expected in my marriage with you, my Stella, the full measure of what your love has realized. Look back awhile," he added, earnestly, "to the day of our wedding, when we thought our love so perfect and complete, and compare that day with this. Don't you feel the difference?"

"Deeply,—thoroughly," said Stella. "The untested, ideal life was very weak beside the proved and realized one. Oh, how I wish the sad and disappointed people in the world, who have married for ambition or money or worldly position, could in some way be got to understand what marriage in its true essence and on its true basis is! How changed the face of creation would be!"

On and on they talked of this and kindred subjects, with a zest that never wearied, for these things were the very passions of their hearts; but into the deep communings of those fervid souls we will not venture to intrude. Better to leave them so, faithful and good and happy, a blessing to each other and to all who come within the range of their influence, living out their tranquil lives together in the haven under the hill.

THE END.

## 'ZEKIEL'S INFIDELITY.

**M**ISTIS, I raly wish you'd hol'  
 A little conversation  
 Wid my ole Zekyel 'bout his soul :  
 Dat nigger's aggiwation  
 Is mos' done worrited me to death,  
 Raslin' wid 'im at ev'y breath.

Dat evil sinner's sot he face  
 Gin ev'y wud I know ;  
 Brer Gabriel say he's fell from grace,  
 An' hell 'll git him, sho'.

He don' believe in sperits,  
 'Skusin' 'tis out a jug ;  
 Say 'tain' got no mo' merits  
 Den a ole half-cured lug ;  
 'N' dat white cat I see right late  
 One evenin' nigh de grave-yard gate  
 Warn' nuttin' 'cep' some ole cat whar  
 Wus sot on suppin' off ole hyah.

He oon't allow a rooster  
 By crowin' in folks' do'  
 Kin bring death dyah, an' uster  
 Say 'e wish mine would crow ;  
 An' he even say a *hin* mout try,  
 'Cep' women-folks would git so spry,  
 An' want to stick deeselves up den,  
 An' try to crow over de men.

Say 'tain' no good in preachin' ;  
 Dat niggers is sich fools,  
 Don't know no mo' 'bout teachin'  
 'N' white folks does 'bout mules ;  
 An' when brer Gabriel's hollered tell  
 You mos' kin see right into hell,  
 An' rambed scriptures fit to bus',  
 Dat hard-mouf nigger's wus an' wus !



Say *quality* (dis is mainer  
 'N' all I'se tole you yit),  
 Say 'tain' no better 'n 'arf-strainer,  
 An' dat *his* master 'll git  
 Good place in heaven—po' white folks, mark!—  
 As y'all whar come right out de ark,  
 An' dat—now jes' heah dis—dat *he*,  
 A po'-white-folks' nigger, 's good as me!

He's gwine straight to de deble!  
 An' sarve him jes' right, too!  
 He's a outdacious rebel,  
 Arter all I'se done do!  
 I'se sweat, an' arguified, an' blowed  
 Over dat black nigger mo'  
 'N' would 'a' teck a c'nal-boat-load  
 Over to Canyon sho':—

I'se tried ref'ection, 'twarn' nowhar!  
 I'se rastled wid de Lord in prar;  
 I'se quoiled till I wuz mos' daid;  
 I'se th'owed de spider at his haid;  
 But he ole haid 'twus so thick th'oo  
 Hit bus' my skillet spang in two.

You kin dye black hyah and meck it light,  
 You kin tu'n de Ephiope's spots to white,  
 You mout grow two or th'ee cubics bigger,  
 But you carn't onchange a po'-white-folks' nigger!  
 When you's dwellin' on golden harps and chunes,  
 A po'-white-folks' nigger's thinkin' 'bout coons;  
 An' when you's snifflin' de heaven'y blossoms,  
 A po'-white-folks' nigger's studyin' 'bout possums.

*Thos. N. Page.*

*THE MISTRESS OF THE WHITE HOUSE.*

**P**OWER, whether it be mental, social, or merely financial, always endows its possessor with a certain fascination which makes his personality at once interesting. The writer of a famous book, the leader of a brilliant coterie, the owner of vast wealth, seems by some subtle process to have a glamour cast over the trifles of his daily life, so that his very moods and fancies, the idlest utterances from his lips, have for the majority of people an interest born doubtless of the sort of curiosity about those whom the world calls "great" which is in some degree to be found in every mind, and seems to me harmless enough, unless it becomes intrusive.

The tourist whose breast is conscious of the most intensely republican spirit pauses before the long glass screen which shuts off the general public view from the private portion of the Executive mansion in Washington, and wonders how and where "they" live,—the President and his family? Have they hours for social intercourse? Do they chat about ordinary topics such as interested them a year ago and will interest them two or three years hence? Does the mistress of the White House move and live and have her being like other simple young matrons? Or is there a touch of royalty in this half-seclusion which the nation grants the President and his family? Are any of the splendors within those closed portals regal? Is she, the sweet girlish mistress of the house, an inaccessible, remote being surrounded by the divinity which doth hedge a king?

It is a fortunate circumstance that some of Mrs. Cleveland's predecessors established precedents which make social and domestic life at the White House more endurable than in the days when the President's wife was expected to return calls and accept almost every invitation offered her. The first lady of the White House, Mrs. John Adams, complained bitterly of the work involved in returning calls, and young Mrs. Tyler made merry over her fatigue in travelling in the "city of magnificent distances." But, startling as some of the innovations were at the time they took place, the present lady of the White House has to be thankful for the freedom left to her. She may visit her friends if she likes, but is not compelled to go through the dreary formality of returning calls that constitutes a part of the social bondage of fashionable life.

The home of the President is now nearing the centenary of its existence. Its story includes much that politically and socially is both

dramatic and picturesque, in spite of the facts that our stern republicanism forbids our endowing it with any of the attributes of a "palace," as it was called at first, and that it changes owners, as a rule, every four years. The White House has seen the rise and fall of so much in the nation's history, the ebb and flow of so much public and popular feeling, so many high hopes and ambitions brought to fruition or laid low in despair, every corridor and staircase, every hall-way and reception-room, bears mute testimony to so much that has to do vitally with lives as well as facts in the progress of the century, that it seems to me of all historic dwellings the most inclusive in its suggestions.

The aspect of Washington must have been dreary enough when the first lady of the White House arrived there. Mrs. Adams's letter dated November 21, 1800, describing the forlorn journey which she took between Baltimore and Washington, affords an amusing contrast to what the President's wife would encounter to-day. But the Federal City had only been a short time in process of building. The Legislature of Pennsylvania, in voting a sum of money for the erection of a suitable house for the President in Philadelphia, had hoped that George Washington would establish the seat of government in the Quaker City, whither he had removed after a year's residence in New York. But the old University was the structure built for this purpose: and Washington decided, with his usual prudence in money-matters, that such a building would entail too great an expense in furnishing and in subsequent occupation. He therefore rented a house of Mr. Robert Morris, in Market Street, between Fifth and Sixth, on the south side, which he furnished handsomely but with no attempt at anything like splendor. A very aged lady told me that she remembered hearing from her mother of Mrs. Washington's prudence in the arrangement of the household linen,—her discussions as to how much fine napery would be required, how many state dinners, etc. On every Friday evening Mrs. Washington held what was then called a "drawing-room," which assembled early, retiring before half-past ten. Once the guests lingered after the clock had struck ten, but the President's wife moved forward and reminded them that the general always retired punctually at ten o'clock. At that time the lady of the mansion always remained seated, the guests being arranged in a circle, around which the President passed, speaking a word or two to every one. Full dress was required of all. Those admitted to the levees were obliged to have a certain station or proper introduction. Being a Virginian, and administering his office so soon after breaking away from English rule, Washington naturally had special livery and a certain amount of formality in his household, which Mrs. Washington is sup-

posed to have enjoyed. An old lady who lived in New York when I was a child used to relate her impressions of President Washington in her own childish days. He walked out daily, she said, with his secretary, who was dressed carefully in black and wore a cocked hat. This lady's mother used frequently to call upon Mrs. Washington, who invariably returned the visit on the third day. Mrs. Washington was always accompanied by the President's secretary, and preceded by a footman, who knocked at the hostess's door and announced Mrs. Washington's arrival. When she drove out, her servants wore liveries of white and scarlet or white and orange. Although no formal regulations had then been made for state dinners, Mrs. Washington decided to give a large party the day before the close of her husband's administration; and in the records of the time—which are, unfortunately, so meagre that the compiler has to search for items and facts among letters and irregular memoirs—it is interesting to find the list of guests on this occasion. The Listons, Wolcotts, Pickerings, McHenrys, Cushings, Bingham, Adamsses, Jeffersons, were present, together with the foreign ministers and their wives and certain church dignitaries. Mrs. Washington endeavored to preserve the usual formalities, but every one felt the occasion to have its pathos. On the removal of the cloth, the President rose, quite unexpectedly saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man. I do it with sincerity and wishing you all possible happiness." Bishop White, who was present, records this, and adds the comment, "This put an end to all pleasantries, and forced the tears into many eyes."

General Washington having decided upon the site of the White House or Presidential mansion, a prize of five hundred dollars was offered for the best plan. James Hoban, a young Irish architect then in Baltimore, submitted a sketch which was approved and accepted. Either because Hoban's knowledge of architecture was limited or because of his instinctive sense of the fitness of things, his plan presented a dwelling solid in structure, ample in dimensions, but with nothing pretentious about it. The Duke of Leinster's house in Dublin was the model, the width of its staircases and door-ways, the length of its halls, and the convenience of its corridors furnishing Hoban with suggestions for what the dwelling of the President of the United States ought to be. In Philadelphia a certain amount of splendor had been almost forced into republican society, but Mrs. Adams, the first mistress of the present White House, was compelled to suffer many restraints from the poor accommodations of her dwelling. She greatly enjoyed the spectacular in social movements, as all persons of vivid natures are sure to do, and this element in her character no doubt

redeemed the first days of the White House from much that would otherwise have been intolerably stupid.

The first reception held in the White House by its first mistress took place in the Oval Room, which is now Mrs. Cleveland's library. Mrs. Adams, as she said of herself, was "a mortal enemy to anything but a cheerful countenance and a merry heart," and she at once infused into the White House during its first *régime* a spirit of kindly hospitality which never since has failed. Her accomplishments and thorough *savoir-faire* did more towards forming social precedents than we at present appreciate. She united strong common sense and democratic feeling in the exercise of her duties with the manners and the grace of a court belle and an exquisite refinement of feeling which prevented her from going to extremes in anything. Certain formalities, however, which belong to Mrs. Adams's period were later abandoned by "Dolly" Madison. Mrs. Madison during the absence of Mrs. Jefferson's daughter had frequently presided at the White House before her husband was President. She possessed the rare faculty of harmonizing discordant elements in any company over which she presided,—a faculty to be prized in the wife of the Chief Magistrate at a time when political feeling ran high. As she decided to exchange the rigid ceremonials of certain occasions at the White House for all the ease and freedom consistent with good breeding, it will be seen that to carry out her innovations successfully it was necessary for Mrs. Madison to combine the various elements which go to making up a perfect lady. At the first reception she held in the White House she is described as wearing a yellow velvet richly embroidered in pearls, and looking at first sight so magnificent that only her charmingly gracious and gentle manner made it easy to approach her. All too soon came the British army into Washington, when the White House for a short time was a scene of horror. During the worst day—August 23—Mrs. Adams wrote almost from hour to hour to her sister, at one time ("Wednesday morning, twelve o'clock") describing her sensations as she is turning her spy-glass in every direction, watching the approach of her husband, at another (three o'clock) reporting herself within sound of the cannon. Finally, when flight from the White House was imperative, she saved Washington's portrait, the servants breaking the heavy gilt frame with an axe and removing the canvas.\* The Executive mansion at that time was partially injured by the British troops, and its walls were blackened. As it was found impossible to remove all traces of the fire except by a new

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\* The tradition that Mrs. Madison removed the picture with a pair of shears is incorrect.



coat of white paint, the building was restored in this way, and hence acquired its present name. Doubtless the fact that Mrs. George Washington's home in Kent County had been known as the White House gave new significance to the title.

Mrs. Madison brought to the White House a spirit which Mrs. Fremont, who knew her well in her old age, rightly calls the *courtoisie de cœur*. She united to this natural instinct of sympathy with others the refinement of early associations and education, and she was by nature possessed of so much beauty and talent that her old age and poverty detracted nothing from her charming manner and stately appearance or her power of making those around her happy. When Washington Irving brought a letter of introduction to Mrs. Madison the young author was enchanted by the prompt courtesy and kindness of his reception, and wrote of a dinner at the White House with much enthusiasm. Mrs. Madison always took the head of the table, Mr. Madison the middle, and one of the secretaries the foot. Conversation was kept lively and interesting by the genial hostess. No mistress of the White House can be said to have rivalled Mrs. Madison in charming affability of manner until the *régime* of Mrs. Robert Tyler. The Tyler administration of course was the result of the death of General Harrison in 1841. As Tyler was a widower at the time, his daughter-in-law presided at the White House. Perhaps the best illustration of what the social requirements of such a position ought to be may be found in Tyler's words soon after hearing of his accession to the Presidency. Calling his daughter-in-law to him, he said, "It is, I trust, scarcely necessary to say that as upon you will presently devolve the duty of presiding at the White House, you should be equal and untiring in your affabilities to all; you should remember that nothing betrays a little soul so much as the exhibition of airs or assumptions under any circumstances."

Such words did not fall on barren soil, for Tyler's daughter-in-law was one of the remarkable women of this century. The daughter of Cooper the tragedian and Eliza Fairlie, whose marriage was one of the sensations of their day, she had been brought up by her parents with the greatest care. She had been on the stage for a short time, acting with her father when his affairs were at their worst.

Mrs. Tyler reached Washington when the spring season had so far deepened that the Capitol City was at its fairest. So young and beautiful and vivacious a mistress of the White House had never before been seen, and indeed the impressions made by her have only been revived in Mrs. Cleveland. From Washington young Mrs. Tyler wrote almost immediately to her sister,—

"What wonderful changes take place, my dearest M——! Here am I, *née* Priscilla Cooper ('nez retroussé,' you will perhaps think), actually living in and, what is more, presiding at—the White House! I look at myself, like the little old woman, and exclaim, 'Can this be I?' I have not had one moment to myself since my arrival, and the most extraordinary thing is that I feel as if I had been used to living here always, and receive the cabinet ministers, the diplomatic corps, the heads of the army and navy, etc., etc., with a faculty which astonishes me. 'Some achieve greatness, some are born to it.' I am plainly born to it. I really do possess a degree of modest assurance that surprises me more than it does any one else. I am complimented on every side; my hidden virtues are coming out. I am considered 'charmante' by the Frenchmen, 'lovely' by the Americans, and 'really quite nice, you know,' by the English. . . . I have had some lovely dresses made, which fit me to perfection,—one a pearl-colored silk that will set you crazy. . . . I occupy poor General Harrison's room. . . . The nice comfortable bedroom, with its handsome furniture and curtains, its luxurious arm-chairs, and all its belongings, I enjoy, I believe, more than anything in the establishment. The pleasantest part of my life is when I can shut myself up here with my precious baby. . . . The greatest trouble I anticipate is paying visits. There was a doubt at first whether I must visit in person or send cards; but I asked Mrs. Madison's advice upon the subject, and she says, return all my visits by all means. Mrs. Bache says so too. So three days in the week I am to spend three hours a day driving from one street to another in this city of magnificent distances. . . . I see so many great men and so constantly that I cannot appreciate the blessing! The fact is, when you meet them in every-day life you forget they *are* great men at all, and just find them the most charming companions in the world, talking the most delightful nonsense, especially the almost awful-looking Mr. Webster, who entertains me with the most charming gossip."

Miss Lizzie Tyler, the President's daughter, assisted in receiving with her sister-in-law. She was called "the young princess," from her exceedingly charming manner. Between her and Mrs. Robert Tyler was the most delightful sympathy. The latter seemed as pleased with the young woman's social success as though she had been actually her own sister. When Lizzie was married, Mrs. Tyler wrote of the wedding with enthusiasm, commenting on the loveliness of the bride, the first ever married in the White House, and the last until the recent wedding of Miss Folsom and Mr. Cleveland. Washington was unusually gay during these happy years in Mrs. Tyler's life. She thoroughly enjoyed everything she saw, people and events passing before

her vividly, since she was conscious that they made up the history of her time, and in her charming letters come allusions to the change in her own position which show that in the midst of her enjoyment of her advantages at the White House she forgot nothing in the past. Writing on one occasion of a ball at the Assembly, "I spent a delightful evening," she said. "As I declined dancing, I had the pleasure of talking to many grave Senators, and among the rest had a long conversation with Mr. Southard. As we stood at the end of the room, which is the old theatre transformed into a ball-room, he said, 'On this very spot where we stand I saw the best acting that I ever witnessed.' . . . Though my heart told me to whom he alluded, I could not help asking him 'what was the play, and who the actor.' 'The play was Macbeth; the performer, Mr. Cooper.' I could not restrain the tears which sprang to my eyes as I heard my dear father so enthusiastically spoken of. I looked around, and thought that not only had papa's footsteps trod those boards. I looked down at the velvet dress of Mrs. Tyler, and thought of the one I wore there six years before as Lady Randolph, when we struggled through a miserable engagement of a few rainy nights!"\*

The President soon after married the brilliant daughter of his old friend Hon. David Gardiner. The tragic death of this gentleman on the steamer Princeton had awakened public interest in the bereaved family, which culminated in the marriage of the President to Julia,—a striking parallel to the events which formed the recent romance of the White House. To this period we must hasten, although the intervening years are full of social interests in Washington, to say nothing of the tragedies which have passed into history.

In the year 1875 the family of Mr. Oscar Folsom, a genial, generous, and companionable gentleman, were residing at the Tift House in Buffalo, when the carriage in which he was driving was suddenly overturned, and Mr. Folsom was killed almost instantly. On that day his wife and little daughter chanced to be out of town; but the

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\* My own remembrance of Mrs. Robert Tyler may be of interest, since it has to do with a recent period. During my childhood she was a frequent visitor at my father's house, and I recall her charm of manner, her still beautiful countenance, and her remarkable ability at dramatic recitation. With her came frequently her daughter, the one whom during the Presidential period Bodisco used to refer to as the "empress of a baby," and whose passion for music was evinced almost before she could speak plainly. I recall her, some fifteen years ago, as a most beautiful and very youthful looking woman, the same type of blonde that her mother had been, with piquant features, profuse golden hair, and the most charming blue eyes. She appeared successfully on the stage in New York several times, and has since, I believe, resided in Alabama. Her mother was then a widow, and had suffered much during the civil war.

dying man was promptly cared for, and his close friend and companion, Mr. Grover Cleveland, immediately took upon himself thought and care for the widow and child.\* The little girl—Frances—was born in the year 1864, on the 21st of July, and her childhood had been passed in a simple, light-hearted fashion, the friends of those days learning to love her for the same simple sincerity of character that has made her since her entrance into the life of the nation so charming a mistress of the White House. Her education began in Mrs. Brecker's French kindergarten. After her father's death she became a pupil of the high school in Medina, where for a few years she and her mother resided, passing their summers at Folsomdale in the large old-fashioned country-house of her grandfather. Returning to Buffalo, the young girl entered the Central School, and quickly gained promotion in her classes. Finding that her Christian name "Frank" occasioned her being constantly entered on the lists of the boys in the school, she determined to alter it to "Frances," the final result of which is the more womanly name by which she now desires to be known. The babyish *sobriquet* of "Frankie" has not been used since she left the nursery, except in the public prints, and is extremely distasteful to her.

From Buffalo Miss Folsom's Central School certificates admitted her to the Sophomore class at Wells College, where she readily won many friends. As one of her school-mates has remarked, from first to last Frances Folsom "had the allegiance of the school," graduating in June, 1885, with the approbation and affection of teachers and pupils alike. Mr. Cleveland's guardianship of the young girl was well known. During the second year of her college life hampers of flowers came regularly from the conservatories of the Executive mansion in Albany, and on the day of her valedictory a superb stand of white flowers near her was the tribute of the President, sent directly from the famous plants in the White House at Washington.

The honors of the White House were at that time done by Miss Rose Elizabeth Cleveland, the sister of the President, who invited Mrs. and Miss Folsom to visit the Executive mansion in the winter of 1886. Miss Cleveland presented the charming young lady who assisted her at certain receptions as "my little school-girl," but it was a family secret, wisely kept as such in order to avoid publicity, that the President and Miss Folsom were engaged. So carefully was this guarded

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\* It has frequently been stated that Mr. Cleveland supported the family of his friend; but this is entirely untrue, Mrs. Folsom's means being adequate for all the requirements of her family, while her father-in-law, Colonel John Folsom, was a man of property sufficient to have assisted her in the education of her children had there been the slightest need of it.

from the public that within three weeks of the marriage some of the bride-elect's most intimate friends were not aware of the engagement. Early in the spring of 1886 Miss Folsom and her mother went abroad for a short trip, visiting France and Italy, but avoiding as much as possible social attention, which would inevitably have resulted in intrusive discussion of the fact of the public honor awaiting her. American girls in Paris had long since made the fact of elaborate shopping unnotable: therefore Miss Folsom was able to procure her trousseau without exciting much comment. In Naples she encountered an old friend, who, having heard some rumor of her approaching marriage, asked her if such an event was soon to take place. Miss Folsom laughingly remarked that she would let her know in good time. The friend then requested her to promise to spend the honeymoon at Deer Park if she married President Cleveland. This was the reason for the selection made of that delightful spot in which the President and his bride passed the first two weeks of their married life. Passage was taken by Mrs. Folsom and her daughter on the Noordland; but, although many of the passengers suspected the state of affairs, all were too delicate to make any direct inquiry, and the young lady appeared as usual, affable and uniformly agreeable, ready to be considerate of others, and genial in her way of receiving the attentions of the ship's company or the cabin-passengers. As a device for killing time, one afternoon during rough weather Captain Codman suggested that each of the cabin-passengers should write a little story or set of verses to be read aloud for the edification of all. This resulted in a manuscript pamphlet called the "North Atlantic Spray," some numbers of which were read each evening. On one occasion the captain produced four pages of foolscap closely written, which he announced as a story called "Little Moll," written by Miss Folsom. The *naïve* plot was substantially as follows:

A reporter on a famous New York newspaper has for his almost daily occupation work in the criminal courts. The ferreting out of crime and the arrest of criminals and their daily punishment are hour by hour reported by the young man. Stories of crime black and foul as were ever written are daily unrolled before him, until his belief in human nature nearly perishes. But his faith is preserved through meeting a poor news-girl who comes and goes daily to the office for copies of the journal on which he serves. The sequel can be imagined. The reporter, steeped as he is in visions of the world's iniquity, and in daily danger of his life (since he had incurred the enmity of the criminal classes), has his life saved by "Moll." In return he places her at school, and ultimately marries her, after which we may suppose he leads a life in which the devious paths of the reporter are shunned.



The story was charmingly written, and showed decided literary ability. Indeed, Mrs. Cleveland has from early years exhibited what would have been developed into a talent for literature had the events of her life called it forth. She has the rare gift of expressing herself fitly and agreeably in a letter, a faculty decidedly uncommon with Americans, unless they have been long influenced by cosmopolitan traditions, but which is part of the grace of foreign life. There should be nothing studied either in the speech or the written words of a lady or gentleman, nothing apparently perfunctory; and the same *courtoisie de cœur* which dignified Mrs. Madison and made those about her happy is the best guarantee for what is essentially "polite." Mrs. Cleveland appreciates this, apparently, as perfectly as did the dear "Dolly" of the early White House days.

Directly the Noordland arrived, Colonel Lamont, who has added to his multifarious duties the part of confidential and discriminating friend, received Mrs. and Miss Folsom and conducted them to the Gilsey House. Here the President arrived soon after. His visit to New York was ostensibly to assist at the celebration of Decoration Day, but by this 30th of May it had become generally known that he was to be married, and, for the first time in the annals of the historic dwelling of our rulers, arrangements were made for a wedding to be celebrated in the Executive mansion itself.

If the public had felt itself defrauded of the dear enjoyment of chronicling the every movement of people conspicuous, it must have appreciated the delicacy which made Miss Folsom shrink from comment or public notice, and, as it was within a day or two a recognized fact that the wedding was close at hand, there was all the effusion that could be desired in the way in which Miss Folsom's movements were thenceforward watched. Miss Rose Cleveland, as hostess of the White House, made every preparation to receive Miss Folsom and her mother on the day of the wedding. In the early morning she met the ladies and their party at the Washington station, which was thronged with people anxious to see their President's bride. What they beheld was a tall, slenderly-built, and beautiful girl, with a manner of extreme simplicity and dignity, who seemed ready to be kindly in her mute observance of the welcome accorded her, yet was too reticent for much demonstration of feeling.

The Blue Room, formerly occupied by Miss Nellie Grant, was prepared for the bride's reception. During the eventful day the President continued to attend to public affairs, with only occasional interruptions from those engaged in preparing for the wedding-ceremony or for a brief time of recreation with the family circle when he and

Miss Folsom together addressed certain boxes of wedding-cake to be sent with their autographs to her particular friends. So informal had they desired the wedding to be that the President himself wrote certain invitations, the following of which may be taken as a specimen :

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, May 29, 1886.

"MY DEAR MR. — :"

"I am to be married on Wednesday evening, at seven o'clock, at the White House, to Miss Folsom. It will be a very quiet affair, and I will be extremely gratified at your attendance on the occasion.

"Yours sincerely,

"GROVER CLEVELAND."

At six o'clock on the afternoon of June 2, a detachment of police entered the White House grounds, to clear the portion of the premises directly south of the mansion, and soon afterwards the members of the Marine Band were admitted to the vestibule. By seven the invited guests arrived, entering the Blue Room on the first floor, the southern end of which was completely banked with flowers. The wedding-procession started from the western corridor on the upper floor. The President came down the staircase, his bride leaning on his arm, the members of the family following, and the strains of the Wedding March ushering them into the Blue Room, where at five minutes past seven o'clock the ceremony was performed. The observances which followed were such as would characterize any home wedding. A supper or collation was served, and an hour later the bride and groom started for their honeymoon at Deer Park, which was conducted as simply as possible. Walking, driving, and fishing were the recreations of the party. They had sought seclusion, but at the same time they did not shun visits from intimate friends, and they could not escape the reporter. On her return to the White House Mrs. Cleveland immediately inaugurated the hospitalities which she has since then so pleasantly dispensed, by a ball at which she wore her wedding-garments of white silk with the necklace of diamonds which was her husband's gift.

Following certain established rules, each mistress of the White House is at liberty to make innovations which have a bearing upon her own methods of daily life. Mrs. Cleveland's days of reception are somewhat different from those of her predecessor; but, while thoroughly dignified and appreciating her position, she is not inaccessible to any one who has a reason for seeing her. Her daily life is varied by certain visits to intimate, friends, private luncheon- and tea-parties, evenings of pleasant social intercourse, which divert the

monotony of the public receptions, and levees, which of course she holds with as much regard for popular feeling as ever Mrs. Robert Tyler displayed.

The White House has undergone few changes of late years, except in furnishing. Entering the main door-way, you find yourself in a spacious vestibule, where there are always attendants in waiting who understand their duties thoroughly and treat every one with respectful attention. Directly the visitor's business is understood, the attendant ushers him, according to the nature of his errand, either to the public offices or to the private reception-room beyond the fine glass screen protecting the vestibule, as it is called, from the private hall, and shutting off the public from the personal portion of the dwelling. The ante-room for official visitors is up-stairs, to the left of the public staircase, a commodious and bright apartment, wherein those waiting for responses to business demands may be seated. Below this is the famous East Room, which the first lady of the White House devoted to laundry purposes, which Mr. Monroe's children used as a play-room, and which later was developed into the gorgeous apartment now open to visitors for certain hours of the day and used as a public drawing-room. Beyond the glass screen a corridor of fine proportions terminates in the conservatories at one end, the Green Room at the other. The Blue Room and Red Room are *en suite*, all three rooms having been upholstered, decorated, and furnished most artistically. The Red Room, used as a reception-parlor by the ladies of the family, presents the usual evidences of home life, with the elegance in finish and ornamentation now so common in American households. The Blue Room is a triumph of artistic decoration, a silvery net-work on the blue ceiling and rich hues in the furnishings and few ornaments of the room impressing the beholder with an idea of splendor. In the Green Room beyond, the tones are more subdued, and, as tropical plants and natural flowers are profuse on all sides, the general effect is very beautiful. Above the Blue parlor is the Oval Room, which Mrs. Cleveland occupies as a family sitting-room, and which is large and finely furnished. There are only seven sleeping-rooms: so that at present no place exists for the proper reception and entertainment of foreign visitors. The cheerless aspect of the Executive mansion has long since vanished, and something like home life within its walls is possible.

The state dinners occurring at certain intervals are still more or less public. These occur in the large dining-room beyond the Red Room. Directly across the hall is the family dining-room, charmingly furnished, which witnesses a pleasant party for the eight-o'clock breakfast, the mid-

day lunch, and the six-o'clock dinner. A competent housekeeper regulates the affairs of the *ménage*, but Mrs. Cleveland takes an active interest in all that is going forward. Her own methods of life are very simple. She is an early riser, fond of reading and informal visiting, interested in the affairs of the nation in a way suited to her years. Personally she is a woman whose charm can by no means be understood through the medium of photography. The first impression she creates is of a girlish figure, tall and willowy, with a well-shaped and well-poised head, soft brown hair, brilliant eyes under finely-marked brows, and a mouth and chin absolutely faultless. The character of the face, if girlish, is intelligent and thoughtful. Although the dimples come readily, the smile is exceedingly sweet, and seems a fitting accompaniment to her extremely well modulated voice. Not a trace of affectation or stiffness is there in her manner, but instead a *savoir-faire* which is remarkable in one so young, unless indeed we accept the natural conclusion that it is instinctive.

The mistress of the White House stands in a position more trying by far than that of any crowned sovereign in Europe. Everything and anything is expected of her. She must unite all the qualities which go to make up a thorough lady; she must pass the ordeal of hours of what may be called public servitude without betraying the least fatigue or inhospitality, whether her guests at a crowded levee come from the wild woods or from the most cosmopolitan centre; she must understand the art of informal receptions,—must be, like foreign royalties, “gracious,” “condescending,” and “amiable,” and at the same time be thoroughly democratic; otherwise she will be severely handled by all the “sovereign people” who constitute themselves her critics. She has not the refuge of seclusion or of divine right which belongs to a queen; and yet her very critics demand from her as much as though she had been born to the purple and received the training necessary for the duties of her station. Happy are we, therefore, when our ladies of the White House possess the inherent sense of the fitness of things which makes Mrs. Grover Cleveland so admirable in her public position, so considerate and unselfish in private life!

Lucy C. Lillie.

## THE UNPOPULAR KITCHEN.

FROM the housekeeper's narrow point of view it is perhaps admissible to speak of the difficulty of obtaining suitable household help as an evil ; but when a little more perspective is taken, this great want of the kitchen is seen to be a necessary feature of our vigorous and hasty growth as a nation.

When we were young and rustic and simple we had no "servant-girl problem" to puzzle over. Then help was obtainable at the house of some neighbor who happened to have a surplus of daughters, no one deeming that she who left her father's roof lost any prestige by the act.

But this system, which governed the wants of a thriving and industrious people, has passed away or been relegated to far-outlying rural districts. With the rapid increase of wealth, houses enlarged and multiplied, and luxurious and fashionable habits grew upon us, till the demand for household help greatly exceeded the supply. The result was inevitable. We had to accept the only help that offered, the pressure being such that few could afford to draw the line at skilfulness or efficiency. So the tidy American kitchen passed into the keeping of the ignorant and untrained immigrant, with whom the daughters of American farmers and mechanics could not and would not affiliate, and domestic service grew to mean to the American girl the very lowest step of the social ladder.

The general ignoring by writers on domestic science of this gulf which was, so to speak, fixed between kitchen and parlor in the early part of our national life lies at the bottom of much of the fruitless discussion on this subject ; fruitless, because the poor American girl, as appreciative of social advantages as her richer sister, is not to be driven into undesirable and unpromising employment by any specious argument based on the supposition that life is a mere question of bread. Life—our glowing, plastic American life—is to her what it is to others,—the scene of a struggle for place. To the persistent question, Why do you prefer the starvation wages of shop or factory to well-paid domestic service? she answers, and answers pertinently, For the same reason that a millionaire's daughter chooses to marry a bankrupt nobleman instead of a wealthy butcher or tradesman. And while there may be those who will say that in both instances there is deviation from sound sense and a wholesome view of life, it must be admitted, nevertheless, even by the most radical, that the error, such as it is, con-



sists in mistaken judgment, not in being possessed of aspiration. - The feeling that prompts one to seek and cling to what is felt to be good and elevating is one that distinguishes civilized beings from savages. Better a people feverish with hope and faith, willing to endure present ill for future benefit,—not always practical in the ordinary sense,—than a people whose wants are all immediate and for the direct benefit of the individual self; better, also, that material good should occasionally be discounted in favor of that good which cannot be eaten like pottage or reckoned in dollars and cents.

And, after all, in what is the poor daughter of America, with her scorn of personal comforts purchased by servility and loss of individual freedom, different from her brother the working-man? He prefers hardship to luxury when the latter costs him the best attributes of his manhood, and with axe in hand seeks the frontier, leaving to foreigners the easy occupations of coachman and butler. Had he been content to be sleek and well-fed,—a dependant at some rich man's house,—where would have been our wealth-breeding mines, grain-planted prairies, and reaches of railroad? Surely those who deprecate the "silly pride" which determines the American girl's aversion to domestic service are, Esau-like, permitting the wants of to-day to blind them to the needs of the morrow, forgetting that what the individual loses in personal comfort through voluntary sacrifice goes to the strengthening and dignifying of the national life and character.

If American labor did not seek the lines of employment offering the greatest number of possibilities for social advancement, as it does, instead of those offering the highest immediate remuneration, as many contend it should, I hold that the prospect of a high future civilization for us would not be promising. The degree of culture that characterizes a people is proportionate to the intensity and duration of the struggle which developed that culture. Let it be borne in mind also that in the elevation of society the efforts of the weaker as well as the achievements of the stronger stimulate general exertion: hence any falling back or yielding of aspiration in the lower ranks must weaken the tension of effort and tend to hasten a condition of comparative fixity. The servant-girl problem may, therefore, be said to be the nucleus of the great class problem which sooner or later will work out its own solution; for the pressure and final settling that will give us our own countrywomen for domestic servants will assuredly stratify society from top to bottom.

But let us not suppose that because of this inevitable settling of our social foundations an aristocracy such as is known in Europe is about to be developed on our Western continent. The national demo-

cratic instinct will doubtless preserve a plane of equality where man may always meet man on a common footing, so that whatever our upper class may prove itself, it is not probable that it will have either legislated privileges or titular distinctions. European social rank is a decided variation from the more ancient caste of the Brahman; the American may be expected to be a variation from and an improvement upon the European. While it is true that shrewdness, perseverance, and vigor—the qualities that won ages ago in the Old World—are at work shaping destiny here, it must be seen that here these qualities are directed to the securing of higher objects. Assuming that our civilization is still in its childhood, and comparing it with the like early stages of older systems, the differences will all be seen to lie in our favor. Money-getting, with all its dishonest practices, is a higher form of brutality than the wholesale plundering and slaughtering of the defenceless; political trickery is less objectionable than assassination; impure legislation is better than feudal tyranny; and trial by jury, however corrupt the panel, is preferable to the old appeal to sorcery to settle a matter of guilt or innocence. With such a start ahead of the beginnings of older civilizations, would it not be strange indeed if the United States did not develop tests of superiority finer than any to-day applied to mankind?—strange and contrary to reason if, in the coming culture, moral courage and high character—rarest of rare qualities—do not do for the man what cunning, bloodthirstiness, and strength of limb did for him of old,—noble achievements in science, statesmanship, art, literature, and beneficence constituting the nobility of the nobleman?

That the struggle that will bring about this high social and moral state of society will be long and severe no one can doubt who notes the equipment of the masses for it. When, therefore, it is taken for granted that only the few will reach the top, we cannot escape looking at the grim other side of the picture, in which the many fail more or less hopelessly. In other words, we see men and women with aspirations half realized and work half achieved crowded out of favorite pursuits by men and women more eminently fitted for those pursuits, the latter having been acted upon in the same manner by persons of yet higher qualifications. For the law of fitness holds nothing too sacred for removal in the interest of that which is a little better.

In the treatment of our subject so far, passive submission to the law of national development has been kept in view. We cannot check the multitude in its headlong pursuit of the prizes of life, and I have endeavored to show that it would not be best to do so were it possible, and that for the troubles of the kitchen no one in particular is responsible; but that we can do absolutely nothing to ameliorate the existing

state of things is far from being asserted. The remedy, however, must be through a gradual reversion of all that brought about what is now endured with so much complaint and bad grace. And, first, we must begin to discriminate between housemaid and housemaid,—between work well done and utter incompetency,—and thus remove the low social dead level of domestic service which our early lack of discrimination engendered. In the constitution of things there is no more reason why one should consider himself “lucky” in having secured a good cook or chambermaid than in having purchased a fine picture. In the latter case it is presumed a high price has been paid to a master of the brush, and no notion of chance as a factor in the purchase associates the artist with a daub.

If, against such discrimination, it is urged that it would aggravate the present distress by adding innumerable inconveniences, the reply is an admission of involved inconvenience. The householder who determines to have either a good servant or none will sometimes be obliged to accept the latter alternative, and a general determination of this kind among employers would doubtless occasion much distress among a class of inapt domestics, who in their strait might possibly be driven to earn their bread in some coarser out-door field. But that this state of things would be worse than the present is not at all apparent. The sieve, the scale, and the measure have been found necessary in the adjustment of the commonest of our every-day transactions. Only in the kitchen, which in the process of our hasty and unsymmetrical growth has been left behind, have the lines of discrimination been trampled down. If it can be shown that the health and well-being of the family are less important than that coals should be regulated by a grate or that masonry should be paid for by the cubic foot, the present system may well be left to correct itself; but otherwise there should be no hesitation in calling things by their proper names and demanding of the house-servant ability to do what she undertakes.

*Jane Ellis Joy.*

## PRIZE ESSAY No. 4.

*SOCIAL LIFE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.*

I SUPPOSE I can best give you an idea of university life here by taking an imaginary student through the many trials and tribulations that await a young man who has never left home before.

The time, then, is the latter part of September. I am an "old man," and am supposed to be at the *dépôt*, which is about half a mile from the university. As the train pulls up, I see a young man get off, stretch himself, look around with a vacant air, as if he wonders where that plague-take-it university is, anyway, and whether this beastly town affords any means of conveying himself and baggage out there, or whether he will have to "foot it." I step up and ask if he wishes to go to the university. A bright smile suffuses his face, and he replies, with a cordiality only begotten by a kind inquiry when one is a stranger in a strange land, "Yes. Can you tell me the best way to get there?"

"I am going up now, and, if you want to, you can have your baggage sent up, and I shall be very glad to show you up myself."

He thanks me, but fears he is giving me too much trouble. I make him easy on this point, and, after confiding his baggage to a trustworthy drayman, we start on our way. By the time we reach the college I have learned his name and a good deal about him, and have, in return, stuffed him with tales of the university, until he is wild to be a full-fledged student. If he has not, by letter to the proctor, bespoken a room beforehand, I take him to that functionary's office, and, through the knowledge acquired from past experience, manage to secure him one of the best rooms to be had,—either on the Lawn, in House F, or on Monroe Hill. I take him up to his room, which we find furnished in the following Spartan style: one bedstead, one small deal table, two chairs, and a looking-glass that gives back two faces, very much distorted, to the gazer.

I immediately order the man in charge to put the mattresses, etc., on the bed, and when that has been done the student has all the comfort he may expect at the hands of the boarding-house-keeper, who furnishes the room in this style and gives board for eighteen dollars a month, or about four dollars and a half a week.

But none of the students leave their rooms in this condition. For as soon as they once more get possession of their trunks, and have procured a wash and a change of linen, off they go down to the post-

office, situated just outside of the university grounds, and around which are clustered half a dozen book-stores and general furnishing-stores, which adopt that precept, so often inculcated in our youth, "See a stranger and take him in," and here they lay out all their ready-cash in furniture for their rooms.

I go around with my new acquaintance, and give him my advice, in the patronizing manner usual from an old man to a new one, as to what he will and what he will not need to make him comfortable. A carpet, pair of curtains, easy-chair, perhaps two, coal-scuttle, etc., table-cover, lamp and oil-can,—and there you are. He has them sent to his room, the number and locality of which he has forgotten, but I inform the merchant for him. Then I leave him, after receiving the warmest thanks, and after each has expressed a hope of meeting again next day. He returns to his room, and at supper-time enters bashfully and fearfully the large dining-hall, where thirty or forty luckless youngsters, as green if not greener than he, are collected for the first time. The dining-room contains a dozen round tables, each of which will seat ten, and around which are placed wooden stools screwed to the floor for purposes of safety. He drops into the first seat he comes to, too frightened to venture farther, and if there are many "old men" in the room they immediately begin to "grin him;" that is, they strike on their plates with their knives and forks, beat with their feet, and shout at the top of their voices, in the effort to make their victim grin. Woe to him if they succeed; for in that event the same thing will be repeated three times a day, until he ceases to notice it.

Next day I meet him again, wandering about the grounds and buildings and trying to look as if he is enjoying himself. I show him everything of interest, and, meeting some of my old friends, introduce him, and soon we are all on a friendly footing. Within the first two weeks of the opening of the session it is considered perfectly correct to speak without an introduction, but after that time never, except under special circumstances. I have sat by a man for a whole session, in a class-room, and never said a word to him. And I knew two men last session who lived within two rooms of each other, and never spoke until the last day of the session, when they happened to meet in a mutual friend's room, who introduced them.

The men to whom I have introduced my friend soon introduce him to others, and in the first two weeks he has ample opportunity to make the acquaintance of his neighbors, and, if he likes them, to get a seat at their table. He now begins to feel more at home. If he is a pleasant, agreeable fellow, he will become an object of interest to the fraternities, which are a large factor in university society. These dif-



ferent clubs, of which there are fourteen, I think, averaging about twelve members, embrace over half of the men at the university, and in all college matters by far the more influential half. There are, however, a great many nice men who do not join the fraternities, either because they have not been asked by the one they prefer, or because they disapprove of the fraternity system on the ground that they prevent outside and general friendships. Here, however, they are mistaken. A great many of my best friends are members not of mine, but of other and rival fraternities.

I take my club-mates around to see my new friend, and, if the general opinion be favorable, proceed to "twig" him, or, in plain English, to ask him to join my fraternity. He probably hesitates, thanks me for the honor, and asks time to consider. If he is asked by some other good fraternity before he decides, it is uncertain how long it will take him to make up his mind. At last a decision is reached, he lets the successful "twigger" know, and generally the first intimation the unsuccessful club has of its defeat is the sight of the rival badge on the left breast of its "goat."

And now his social pleasures begin. He may have letters of introduction to one or more of the professors, but in any event some of his new friends take him to call. In the neighborhood of the university is collected a set of the prettiest, most stylish, and altogether most charming young ladies it has ever been my lot to associate with. Most of the professors give a number of small receptions at the beginning of each session, and, as our friend has been fortunate enough to get a "bid" to one of these, he comes rushing over to our room to ask whether he ought to wear a dress-suit, whether there will be dancing, whether a black necktie will do as well as a white one, etc. The questions a young man can ask when on the eve of his first appearance among strangers, whose manners and customs he seems to think must be entirely different from those in vogue anywhere else in good society, are innumerable. We tell him that dress-suits are never worn here except at Germans, and that otherwise he must dress just as if he were going to a party at home. He turns away with a half-concealed sigh of disappointment; for he had evidently intended to make many a "mash" in that new dress-suit. But off he goes, at last, to dress, and we to mature our plans for the night's campaign.

We first visit the rooms of all our acquaintances, and inform them of the fact that our new man has a "bid," and that he must be initiated into the mysteries of a "dyke." This project meets with general acceptance, and preparations are forthwith begun for this time-honored and purely local institution. Dyke is said to be derived from the

Greek verb *δείκνυμι*, to "show," to "point out,"—I suppose from the action of pointing with the right hand at the victim as you scream, "Dyke!"

The preparations are made by procuring all the old horns, some of them six, eight, and ten feet long, that we can lay our hands on; all the coal-scuttles, not in actual use, for drums; and old clothes, wrapped around sticks and saturated with oil, for torches. With this paraphernalia we collect around the door of our innocent friend, and, making the rest conceal themselves behind pillars, trees, and everything else available, I go into his room and watch him dress, talking all the time in the most unexcited way possible. At last he is ready. I stay behind to blow out the lamp, as he goes out of the door. I hear the words "Here he is, boys!" "All right," and a hurried "Why, what's the matter? What are you going to do?" His questions are unheeded, and, after a momentary halt to give the fifty torch-bearers time to apply a match to the combustible material on the ends of their poles, the prolonged shout "Dyke! dyke! dyke!" is heard echoing and re-echoing up and down the arcades, rousing all students, especially the new ones, from their studies. The cry spreads like wildfire, and is taken up from room to room, house to house, range to range, until the venerable old walls seem to shake with the din. Amid the shouts, the blowing of the immense horns, and the beating of tin pans, the victim, in the hands of his quasi-friends and by the glaring light of torches, now increased to perhaps a hundred, is rushed around the lawn, around the ranges, and then up the middle of the campus, and is finally placed upon the topmost step, leading to the rotunda porch, some fifteen or twenty feet above the sea of upturned faces, which seem to be so cruelly enjoying themselves at his expense. Some kind friend behind him takes off his hat for him, another catches him back of the neck and compels him to make a bow. The cries of "Speech! speech!" make the welkin ring and the windows in the old dome rattle. If he is a wise young man, he will keep silent; if not, he will attempt to speak; but he will never get further than the first word, to be deafened by the applause. In some ten minutes he is considered to have had enough. The audience take him down, put on his hat, and rush him down the middle of the lawn at full speed. When the house at which the entertainment is given is reached, the two hundred men (for I have frequently seen that many engaged in a dyke) form a double line extending fifty or seventy-five yards, and the luckless victim is rushed through by two captors, right up into the house, little pitied by, but affording much amusement to, the girls assembled at the windows. But when, despite Scylla and Charybdis, he has safely reached his haven, they make up for their heart-

lessness by being doubly sweet to him ; and as he wends his way homeward, somewhere about the witching hour of twelve, he declares that for such pleasure he would suffer it all again.

He soon makes the acquaintance of most of the young ladies in the neighborhood, if he is a "calicoist" (which implies a greater lover of the fair sex than of his studies), and pursues their acquaintance, or not, as his own sweet will may dictate.

A german club is generally formed in the early part of the year, and gives a german about once a month, though last year it gave eighteen. This club is composed of the dancing girls as well as young men : the latter have to sign a pledge not to drink a drop of any kind of liquor from twelve o'clock of the day of the german until twelve the next day. This prevents any disorderly conduct, and makes the germans much less objectionable than formerly to the quiet citizens, who were liable to be disturbed at all hours by the uproarious germanites after the dancing was over. Our young friend, if fond of dancing, joins, and goes in for an amusement in which only the dancing girls engage. If however, he is not a disciple of Terpsichore, and is still fond of ladies' society, he has an equal number of beautiful and accomplished girls, who will talk, walk, ride, or flirt with him, but disapprove of dancing.

If our friend is not susceptible to the charms of the fair sex, he is by this time deep in his studies, getting quite interested in some ancient Greek, Latin, or Hebrew novelist, or else is just beginning to see the beauty of solid geometry, law, or anatomy. If he does not care to study, he will find many who are only too glad to teach him how to spend his money, and frequently to spend it for him. But we will not suppose our friend has such a disposition as either to be afraid of the girls or his studies. For it very frequently happens that the best students do a good deal of "calicoing."

About this time he is asked, either by a friend or some person specially appointed for the purpose, to unite himself with the Y. M. C. A., which is the oldest college Y. M. C. A. in the world,—having been founded in 1858 and having been kept up ever since. If he is a member of any established church, he rarely hesitates to take advantage of this opportunity to show his interest and join in the only religious work of the university ; for the Y. M. C. A. is the only authorized religious organization here. It raises, by subscription from all the students, the salary of the chaplain, who is chosen biennially by the faculty from the four denominations, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Episcopal. Taking into consideration the fact that all religious exercises are voluntary, we are very proud of the fifty men that appear

at prayer-meeting, and of the one hundred and thirty whose names we have on our roll. Our friend is also asked to join the Temperance Union, which has for its object the furtherance of the cause of temperance by means of a total-abstinence pledge lasting until the end of the session. It is also a debating society, and, this year, has about twenty-five active members, besides a good many more who have signed the pledge but do not care to take an active part in the proceedings.

He is certainly expected to connect himself with one of the literary societies, and in doubt comes to me for my advice and opinion on their respective merits. And I proceed to give my ideas on the subject, as follows. The "Wash." is composed almost entirely of hard-working men, who mean to get all the good they can out of everything, and therefore their debates are really instructive and interesting. As a natural consequence, they pay less attention to society politics, and their elections create little excitement in college. The "Jeff.," on the other hand, professes to be the "swell" society, and to have the more popular and influential men enrolled among its members. The debates are paid little attention to during the year, and consequently every one is surprised to see such a good display in the contest for the medal. But this is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that a majority of the brightest intellects of the three hundred or more students is here collected. The election for Final President in the Jeff. constitutes one of the greatest excitements of the year to the sixty or eighty members of that society. The candidates begin their canvass two or three months before the election, and sometimes as much as a year before. The contest is waged with such bitterness that warm friendships are frequently broken, never to be renewed. Here we encounter the most objectionable feature of the system of secret fraternities. The average fraternity man does not vote according to his own opinion as to the fitness of the candidate for the position, but entirely as his fraternity goes. Of course there are exceptions, but they are rare. This arouses ill feeling and jealousy between fraternities, which is very apt to lead to open breaks. I suppose the men would form themselves into cliques if fraternities were not allowed, and the same bad result would follow. But why is it that the young men of this country cannot carry on the simplest and most unimportant election without employing all the tricks, and frequently the dishonorable combinations, that so strongly characterize the average politician of to-day? Can they find no better model after which to copy? Frequently as many as thirty men are rushed into the society, simply for the purpose of voting for the Final President; but this year a law was passed to the effect that no man could vote for Final President unless he had been a member four months

previous to the election, and thus this objection has been virtually done away with. After hesitating awhile, our friend decides to join the "Jeff." and help reform the present state of things, and possibly get the Final Presidency.

We suppose now that about a month has passed since the beginning of the session. Most of the verdancy has worn off our *protégé*, and he is able to scramble along for himself about as well as any one else. Some evening when he is hard at work preparing his lectures for the next day, a knock is heard at his door, and in answer to his loud "Come in," three or four of his new friends enter, and, after a "Good-evening, old fellow; are you in for some fun?" seat themselves wherever room can be found,—some on chairs, some on the bed, and one or two on the trunk,—and unfold their scheme. Within the last day or so a young fellow has arrived who is in danger of being eaten by the cows, so "green" is he, and consequently it would be a sin and a shame not to initiate him into the order of the "Sons of Confusius." The scheme is adopted unanimously. One of the men has already introduced himself to his victim, and on the first opportunity presents his friends. All are cordial and pleasant, talk a great deal about the honor of being asked to join a fraternity, and soon convince him that it is the highest aim of a university student to join one of those mystical bodies. When his mind has been prepared for the acceptance of any rite or ceremony, one of the number is chosen to "twig" him, and he gives his willing consent to be initiated, without asking about the standing of the Sons of Confusius. A night is appointed for the ceremony. At the given hour you may see ghostly figures wending their way towards the dissecting-hall, which is the scene of the initiation. The victim is brought in on the shoulders of five of the tallest men, his eyes blindfolded, and his head inclined towards the ground at an angle of about fifteen degrees. There are fifty or sixty men present, all dressed in white sheets, with their faces concealed by masks. A dim light, emanating from the eyes, nose, and mouth of a skull filled with alcohol sprinkled with salt, pervades the room. Against the wall stand three or four skeletons in the most natural attitudes. On the floor and upon the tables lie human bones. After doleful wails and cries from the spectators, the eyes of the victim are unbound, and he finds himself in a dimly-lighted room, surrounded by a crowd of spirit-like forms and face to face with a grinning skeleton. Brave must he be who does not feel a disagreeable sensation at such a moment. But, having declared his willingness to go through with the initiation, the dread of ridicule prevents him from retracing his steps. A half-hour is spent in absurd and, to the lookers-on, highly diverting ceremonies. The victim is then



taken outside, put in one of the strongest blankets, and given a little tossing, though not enough to hurt him.

This and the Dyke are the only approaches to hazing that I have ever heard of here; and this mock initiation occurs only at rare intervals, when an unusually "green" boy falls into our hands. As a rule, the old students are kind and considerate towards the new men, and do what they can to help them over the first two weeks of homesickness and loneliness. There is none of that class-feeling which plays such a prominent part in the life of most other colleges and universities, and after the first month or two the newly-entered student has just as good a standing in college as one who has been here one or two years; though, of course, the longer he stays the more friends he will have, and the better known he will be.

As I walk with my friend one afternoon, he asks, with what he intends to be an undemonstrative face, what I think of the "Eli Bananas," and requests me to tell him something about them. In reply, I inform him that it is a club of college students founded in 1878 at the White Sulphur Springs, at one time having several chapters, but now merely local. It was founded for the purpose of promoting sociability and good-fellowship among the members; and from its original object it has hardly swerved a jot up to the present time. The club has two initiations during each session, one in the fall and the other at Easter. Up to a year ago a large wine supper was given on each of these occasions, at which there were few who did not get quite "happy" before the night was over. But last year they adopted the plan of giving a german at Easter instead of a supper, which change seems to meet the approval of all. This club embraces the most popular and influential men of each fraternity, and, as the fraternities themselves have already picked them over very carefully, there is no excuse for the "Elis" ever having anything but the flower of the university. The "Elis" do much towards breaking up any fraternity feeling that may exist, since frequently the leading members of rival fraternities are thrown together intimately here and form firm friendships. It is considered a very high honor, I believe, to be asked to join this "upper ten," and there are never more than eight or ten admitted during the year. They boast that no one has ever refused to join them when asked. But, if that is so, I will venture to assert it is because they take very good care to be certain of their man before asking him.

My friend then asks if I think it possible for a man to join them and still be free from dissipation. I tell him yes, but that there is much more temptation for a member of a club like this than for an outsider. He informs me that he has been asked to join the "Elis,"

and, unless I advise him strongly to the contrary, he thinks he will give them an affirmative answer. I tell him I have given all the objections I have to the club, and that he must decide for himself, which he immediately proceeds to do; for he announces that evening his intention to join the "Eli Bananas" at their next meeting.

Here I have represented a man who has the honor offered him,—does not run after it. But, I am sorry to say, this is by no means universally the case; for some men will toady, fawn upon, and cringe in the most disgusting manner to those whose influence they wish to employ in getting into this club. Fortunately, fellows of this sort rarely meet with success in their endeavors, but only with the just contempt of their companions and the loss of such good standing as they had possessed before their vain attempt to soar to higher heights. Popularity, here as elsewhere, must seek, not be sought.

Since I have succeeded in getting my young friend into the "Elis," I think that he is now fully able to take care of himself; and, as his life after this is exactly like that of all the rest, I shall abandon him, and hereafter speak in a more general manner.

There is comparatively little interest taken in athletics of any kind; still, we have a gymnasium fairly well equipped, and out-door sports in which some very good records are made; and we had some years ago a boat club whose crew carried off the challenge cup at the State Regatta five times in succession. But since the cup was lost in '84 no crew has been sent to represent the university at the annual meeting of Virginia oarsmen. There is a base-ball team, chosen from really good material, but they and the rest of the college men take so little interest in the national game that they hardly ever practise, and won't go to the necessary trouble to have their grounds put in good order. The professors discourage the students going away from the university to play, and the natural consequence is that the game soon loses interest and supporters, since there is no competition.

The average man's daily routine commences with breakfast at half-past seven, and from that time until eleven or twelve at night he is hard at work, either preparing or reciting his lectures, with the exception of an hour for dinner and another for supper, and in most cases a third for exercise.

His opportunities for enjoyment are few, consisting of perhaps an hour's chat and smoke in some companion's room immediately after supper, and an occasional entertainment or visit to some of his lady friends. As a great many of the young ladies in the neighborhood live in the professors' houses, they are almost our next-door neighbors, and it takes little time to pay a call. I have frequently paid two calls after

tea and then gotten in three hours' study before bedtime. There is little stiffness in the society here, and many young men are privileged to drop in to tea or dinner without an invitation at almost all the professors' houses. Two friends have little time to see each other, except in the hour before and after tea, and if their rooms lie far apart this is almost impossible: so frequently one may go three or four days without seeing an intimate friend, unless both happen to have the same class.

In the lecture-room the professors treat the students as gentlemen, to whom politeness and consideration are due, and the students consider their professors their best advisers in time of trouble or when they wish help, and try to spare them annoyance when possible. I shall now touch upon that crowning jewel in the diadem of this grand old university,—that, in fact, which has given her the reputation, of which she is so justly proud, of sending from her halls men noted for their sense of honor and self-respect: I refer to the honor system, which has been in vogue here for more than forty years. A student's word is considered by the professor as good as his bond, and on an examination there are no watchful teachers ready and glad to detect fraud, but a notice is simply put upon the blackboard, requesting those standing the examination to append to their papers the statement that they have neither given nor received assistance. The student who signs this statement is considered to have pledged his honor. There has been only one case, to my knowledge, of cheating at examination, and on that occasion the students were so indignant at the confidence reposed in them being betrayed by one of their number that they held a mass-meeting and sent him away before the faculty could interpose. I have known of several cases of men caught cheating at cards or at something else dishonorable, and in every case the culprits were treated in the same way.

It is impossible to overestimate the benefit to the student and professor from this kind of honorable, friendly intercourse, which is one of the characteristic features of the University of Virginia.

As the session draws to a close, the men who have not been spending much time on their studies during the year get tired, and the longing to see home is not counteracted by the hope of reward in their classes, so very naturally they begin to drop out and wend their way homeward, and thus by the time the final examinations are upon us there are few left who are not making the most of their time in preparation.

These final examinations begin about the middle of May, and occur at intervals of two days until the last of June, when there reigns the wildest excitement as the different lists go upon the bulletin-board, an-

nouncing the names of the successful candidates for degrees and diplomas. Then is the time for true friendship to appear, for on one side is the successful friend for whom you must wear a happy, delighted expression, and on the other the friend who has "busted" and needs all your sympathy and comforting assurances. The excitement even seizes the fair ladies of the community, so that you hear nothing from morning till night but queries as to the results of the examinations.

On the last Sunday in June is delivered the final sermon before the Y. M. C. A., by some noted divine invited for the purpose. On Monday and Tuesday nights respectively are held the final celebrations of the "Wash." and "Jeff." Societies. Tuesday morning is devoted to the joint celebration of these two societies, when they are addressed by some man of prominence either in politics or literature.

On Monday morning and Tuesday afternoon are given two Germans, where may be seen some of the fairest daughters of the South and the prettiest dancers in the world.

Wednesday is the final day of the session, and early in the morning the young men who have won their degrees, professional or academic, may be seen flitting about in their dress-suits, and those who will take diplomas dressed in their best for the gala occasion.

At ten o'clock the procession forms on the beautiful sward in front of the rotunda, the Board of Visitors in the place of honor at the head of the line, then the professors, next the graduates, by classes, and last of all the men on whom are to be conferred degrees.

Weber's band at a given signal strikes up some familiar march, and forward moves the line, up the long steps, down the long, broad passage, and into the Public Hall, with its thousand expectant faces and happy hearts. After all the diplomas and degrees have been conferred on the happy recipients, the session is declared at an end.

Then is introduced the orator of the day, chosen from among our distinguished alumni. After listening for an hour to an interesting speech, and cheering as much as the exhausted and weakened state of our lungs will allow, we disperse, with sad hearts at the thought that this delightful session has come to a close. We no longer remember our trials and difficulties and our hours of toil, but only the happy, thoughtless times in which we have let books go to the winds, and the many warm friendships we have made.

On Wednesday night occurs the greatest event of the Finals, in the opinion of the dancers,—the final ball.

The large library, a circular room fifty feet in diameter, with a dome roof having a pitch of about thirty feet, is used as the ball-room. Little alcoves surround it, which afford a splendid opportunity for flirtations

and nice comfortable chats, which you may be sure are liberally patronized between the dances. The floor is like glass, and as the fairy feet glide in such perfect time over its smooth surface in response to the strains of those beautiful waltzes, we think it must all be a dream, and that we will surely have to go through with the same old routine to-morrow.

The ball breaks up about daybreak, and on the early train depart most of those who have participated in it. Those last hand-shakes and farewell words make us realize for the first time that in all probability we shall not see these familiar faces back next year, but shall have to make new friends and lose them again just as we are doing now.

Next year will be very much the same sunlight and shadow as this has been, just as much work and as little fun, or, as it seems to us from our present stand-point, just as much fun and as little work.

*J. B. Minor, Jr.*

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### THE PASSING OF THE SINGER.

HE came alone, the pale singer,  
'Long the dusty road to the town :  
His feet were worn and his heart was torn,  
His eyes were wide and brown.

He paused in the street of the city,  
And hope sprang up amain :  
To the surging throng that hurried along  
He sang a plaintive strain.

But some had to buy in the market,  
And others to sell in the shop,  
And many to play, and a few to pray,  
And none had time to stop.

So they did not hear the music,  
They did not turn to look,  
Save a woman worn, and a lover lorn,  
And a student over his book.



## THE PASSING OF THE SINGER.

Men had no time to listen,  
And he no heart to wait :  
So he hushed his song and passed along  
Out through the city gate.

He went alone, the pale singer,  
'Long the dusty road from the town :  
His cheeks were thin, and tears stood in  
His eyes so wide and brown.

And the woman's lip was trembling,  
As she turned from her work to look :  
The lover lorn forgot to mourn,  
And the student closed his book.

When the sunset gates were opened,  
And the western skies aflame,  
From over the hill to the city still  
A magical music came.

Men cried, " Do you hear the music ?"  
They were resting after the day.  
" That singer sweet to our city street  
Shall come and dwell for aye !"

Far over the land they sought him,  
Sought till the night grew late ;  
But the weary feet of the singer sweet  
Had passed the sunset gate.

Then back to the streets of the city,  
Back to its tire, they came ;  
And eyes were wet with a sweet regret  
As they spoke the singer's fame.

He passed alone, the pale singer,  
And no one turned to look,  
Save a woman worn, and a lover lorn,  
And a student over his book.

Now ever in hush of evening  
Men sit with lips grown dumb,  
As over the hill to the city still  
The songs of the singer come.

*Charles Washington Coleman, Jr.*

*WEST POINT, THE ARMY, AND THE MILITIA.*

THE Board of Visitors to the National Military Academy in 1883 told all that they had learned about the school, or cared to say about it, in two printed pages: they were impressed with the perfection and beauty of everything, and had nothing to suggest.

The report of the Board of 1884 contains some thirty pages, including the oration which one of the Visitors delivered to the cadets and which the other eleven Visitors voted to make a part of their report. This Board mustered up courage enough to make a few suggestions, albeit with great diffidence, as they confess. They recommended increasing the size of the band and teaching more Spanish. Some committees were more radical in their suggestions, but the Board, as a whole, could not go beyond the recommendations in favor of more Spanish teaching and a brass band of forty pieces. As a whole, the Board viewed the horsemanship of the cadets with astonishment, and of the training and development at the Academy they were satisfied "that there is nothing in all the civic colleges and universities at all equal to it." In fact, the Visitors, petrified at the accomplishments of the cadets, observe, "It may by some be questioned whether or not it is necessary, in order that a young man may become a good officer, that he should know as much or be able to do as much as he is made to do and is taught at West Point."

The Visitors of the next two years went to work with an evident purpose to find out whether the Military Academy were really abreast of the times, and, if not, wherein it could be improved. But in reading their painstaking reports two or three things must be borne in mind. No Board of Visitors present at an educational establishment merely during the examinations can get much information about it. It is certain that no virtue that the school possesses will be permitted to escape their attention, and it is equally certain that any fault that they discover must be too large and obtrusive to be covered up by the faculty even for a few days. The Military Academy and its graduates do not come into competition with the civic colleges and their graduates, and it is almost impossible to find any means of comparison to assist one in getting at the relative value of the methods employed at West Point.

Then there are features peculiar to the Military Academy that must be borne in mind. It is a professional school, designed to train youths to be army officers. After military science and tactics, engineering must

be the leading study in such a school. Hence various branches of mathematics predominate to a very marked degree in the curriculum.

Now, if we turn to the report of the Board of Visitors for 1885, we find the following which the Secretary of War picks out and quotes in his annual report:

"At the present time no theoretical instruction whatever in military subjects is given during the first two years at West Point. In the third year twenty-three hours in all are devoted to recitations in infantry, artillery, and cavalry tactics, and it is not until the fourth (and last) year that professional topics are reached. In the opinion of the Board, all changes that may be made in the course of study hereafter should be directed to the end of allowing more time to be devoted to the study of the science and art of war in all its relations, to the theory of tactics in its broadest form, and to those professional studies which more directly fit the graduated cadet for military service."

Turning now to the report of the Board of Visitors for 1886, we find the following:

"There is one fact, however, no less apparent to the Academic Board than to the Board of Visitors, and that is the necessity for remodelling the course in practical engineering. The text-books in use are not up to the knowledge of the day, nor do they grasp the subject-matter with the force that is required. . . . It is suggested that an officer of engineers, experienced in field operations and especially qualified by thought and study for such duty, be detailed for duty at the Academy to aid the professor of engineering in revising the course."

A military school where military studies are almost ignored, and where, in spite of the fact that everything is sacrificed to mathematics, the practical engineering is so far behind the times that even a Board of Visitors observe it, invites some more thorough scrutiny than a dozen guests of the faculty are able to give it during the period of the annual examinations. The Board of 1884 thinks that there is nothing in all our civic colleges to compare with West Point, where a few more musicians in the brass band and a little more teaching of Spanish are alone needed to insure absolute perfection, but the Board of 1885 is frank enough to recognize the fact that West Point has been standing still while the civic colleges have been developing wonderfully in the last forty years. The report says,—

"From its foundation up to within the last thirty years or so, the Military Academy was not only a special school for war, but also the best technical academy in the country in such subjects as engineering, mathematics, physics, etc. Since this date a great number of admirable technical schools of special subjects have been established, which devote

from two to ten times as much attention to a particular study as can be given it at the Military Academy. It is therefore plain that the Academy is not to be regarded as a technical school of mathematics, physics, chemistry, or engineering. It is primarily a technical school for war."

Although the full Board of 1884 was appalled at the vastness of the erudition of a graduate of the Military Academy, a committee of the Board indulged in the following criticism:

"They incline to doubt the wisdom of the course pursued in the somewhat technical instruction given in English, including rhetoric, and to suggest for consideration the question whether better results might not follow from devoting much time to reading aloud from acknowledged English classics, and the writing of simple themes, which last should be examined and commented on by the instructors."

The same thing seems to have been in the minds of the Visitors of 1886 when they asked, concerning what is called the ethical course,—

"Has experience shown that the text-books in this course are the best calculated to give to the minds of the cadets that polish which cannot be extracted from pure mathematics? Is there not lacking at the end of the course that habit of clear enunciation and that power of constructing the English language so essential to a finished education? On the contrary, is there not developed, from one cause or another, a habit of hesitation in speech, a useless repetition of words, and a want of confidence in the methods and manner of stating conclusions to which the mind has arrived?"

Some knowledge of United States history is required for admission to the Academy, but there is no United States history or study of our form of government in the curriculum. French is taught the first two years, and Spanish the last year. No Frenchman or Spaniard, however, is permitted to meddle with these studies. It is not surprising that a committee of the Visitors of 1884 concluded that "the instruction in the modern languages does not seem to produce satisfactory results." The committee looks on the ability to speak French as only "an elegant accomplishment," but takes a more serious view of speaking Spanish, and urges the employment of a Spaniard to teach pronunciation, with whom it is stipulated the cadets shall come in contact only in the presence of the professor. Under this queer arrangement the construction of the language would be taught by an American, but the "native Spaniard" would be taken out of the apparatus cabinet for the occasion and would pronounce the words. The language of the nation that for more than twenty years has been the foremost military power of the world does not appear anywhere in the course of study.

Although the mathematical studies occupy so much time at West Point, the Visitors of 1885 state that "It is known to the Board of Visitors that the mathematical studies at the Academy are no higher than those of similar schools abroad, and that they are lower than the requirements of many of the best foreign military schools." Only arithmetic is required to be understood for admission to the Academy. To get into the Freshman class of a civic college a youth must pass an examination in algebra and geometry. If these were required for admission to the Academy, much time would be saved. As the cadet gets his appointment a year before entering the Academy, he has a fair amount of time for special preparation. If he is to be educated gratuitously, paid a salary for studying, and provided with permanent employment on graduating, it would be no hardship to require his family to give him a little more than a common-school education before he goes to West Point.

But mathematics take up so much of the time at the Academy that the Board of 1885 tried to find out whether a little calculus or descriptive geometry might not be dispensed with, and for information they applied to the faculty. If a course of study be at fault, or be supposed to be, the faculty is the last body of men to go to for suggestions of improvement. In common fairness to the faculty, it must be assumed that they have done the very best they know how. What is most noticeable in the replies from the professors is the intensity of the conviction on their part that whatever has been must be right. Prof. Michie says, "The present system is the result of careful deliberation and adjustment on the part of the Academic Board [the faculty] for a period of nearly eighty years, and I do not think I have the right to express, as an individual member, any opinion contrary to its judgment, even were I to hold views antagonistic to the system as it now exists." Prof. Bass is entirely satisfied with the present system, and says, "I will simply refer to the fact that after a test of more than forty years, during which the division of time has been essentially the same as now, the United States Military Academy, considering its purposes, is acknowledged to-day by military men of all civilized countries to be the best in the world, and that the officers of the United States army as a class are unsurpassed in their profession by those of any nation." That is a rather sweeping generalization for a professor of an exact science to indulge in; but one cannot help reflecting that there is no civic college in the country whose professors would boast that there has been no substantial change in its curriculum since 1840 or thereabouts.

There are two marked differences between the Military Academy



and civic colleges that deserve attention. All our leading colleges have within twenty years modified their courses of study with a view to developing the individuality of the students: if a man show special talents for mathematics, or geology, or Greek, he is afforded special facilities for perfecting himself in that branch. The army calls for almost as wide a variety of gifts and acquirements as civil life, but every art is employed at West Point to repress individuality and make all graduates as nearly as possible repeats of a given pattern. The cadet who is going into the infantry must study just as much calculus as the unfledged engineer, and the cadet who is to sit in an office and project river and harbor improvements must practise just as much bare-back riding as the cadet who is going into the cavalry. The cadets' quarters must not only be kept in order, but they must be kept exactly alike. No picture, map, or ornament may be affixed to the wall, because it would not be practicable to have identically the same pictures, maps, and ornaments in all the rooms. The Visitors of 1885 advised one modification of this regulation,—namely, that a map of the United States, Canada, and Mexico be permanently fastened up in each room. This would preserve uniformity, keep the outlines of his own and the neighboring countries before the eyes of each cadet, and mitigate the mural monotony.

In reply to the questions of the Board of 1885, two professors and an instructor suggested so radical a departure from tradition at West Point, and so marked a concession to modern educational methods, as a modification of parts of the course with a view to special preparation for different branches of the service. Prof. Larned, professor of drawing, suggested that after the second year a class should be divided, the best scholars going on with the present course as a preparation for the engineer and ordnance corps, and perhaps the artillery, and the less scholarly part dropping calculus and taking up military administration, camp and garrison duty, care of the horse and material of war, military supply and services in the field. Some of these branches would seem to be necessary from the fact that the Visitors urge that military hygiene be taught the cadets. Prof. Postlethwaite, professor of history, etc., is not so specific as Prof. Larned, but he inquires suggestively whether all the cadets should be put through the course that is needed by the small number of cadets that go into the engineer corps. Major Stanton, instructor in engineering, thinks it very desirable that in the third year the amount of mathematics should be reduced for cadets who cannot study the highest mathematics with profit. The major had noticed certain defects in the English education of cadets which are commented on by a committee of the Visitors of 1884 and the full Board

of 1886. He says, "Graduates often leave the Academy with inadequate instruction in the English language."

In all civic colleges that can afford it, instruction is given by men of special training in the branches that they teach and by men whose profession, whose life-work, it is to instruct. At West Point there are only eight professors. These gentlemen are assisted by eight assistant professors and thirty-eight instructors, who are army officers, who are detailed usually for four years, and who in the interval between their graduation and their detail as instructors may have been on duty in a fort near a city where possibly they could keep up their studies, or may have been engaged in the intellectual pursuit of chasing the bounding red man over the lava-beds, or hunting him out of his favorite places of retirement in the Sierra Madre Mountains. They may be detailed for duty as assistant professors at West Point to afford them a chance to rest from the fatigues of duty on the plains. At any rate, teaching is not their vocation, and they may or may not have the qualifications of teachers. The Visitors of 1886 say, "Most of them have been proficient while cadets in the several branches to which they are detailed as instructors. Their capacity for instruction, however, has had no opportunity for development, and consequently their being detailed for this duty is purely experimental. The question that naturally presents itself is this: Is not this experimental detail somewhat detrimental to those who are to be instructed?" The Visitors are too modest to offer an answer to their own question, but they observe that "a capacity for teaching does not always accompany the possession of knowledge."

It may be almost impious to suggest it, but the temerity of some of the recent Visitors stimulates boldness in others, and West Point might as well recognize the fact that there are people who question whether the Military Academy has proved itself eminent as a school of engineering. Necessarily the work of our engineers is almost entirely of a civil character. Most of it is the improvement of rivers and harbors. The greatest achievement in this direction, the opening of the mouth of the Mississippi, was the work of a civilian whose project was not approved by the engineers. There are one hundred and nine engineer officers; and one hundred and four civilian engineers, educated at the Troy Polytechnic, the Sheffield Scientific School, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and like schools, are associated with, or employed under, these engineers in the planning and execution of the river and harbor improvements. The works are under the immediate care of civilians, and reports are usually written by civilians and then transmitted to the War Department with a *résumé* and general expression of

approval by the army engineer in charge of the work. The completion of the Washington Monument was under the direction of an engineer officer, but it is reputed that the most difficult engineering problems connected with the structure were solved by an infantry lieutenant who did not have a West Point education and a mechanic who did not have any professional education.

But if our engineers lack anything as scientific men they certainly lack nothing as fighters. General Sherman made some careless remark some time ago about engineers as very useful men to plan fortifications, but not fellows that go out and do the fighting; and in a speech in the Senate a year ago General Logan observed that all nations looked to their cavalry, their infantry, and their artillery for their fighters; they never thought of looking to the engineer corps for officers to lead troops. But it happens that we keep a good deal of our best fighting material in the engineer corps. If one will look through our army register for 1860, he will find, probably to his surprise, that the engineer officers furnished a larger proportion of army and army-corps commanders and distinguished division commanders than the more strictly militant branches of the service. In 1860 there were eighty-nine officers of engineers, and among them were the following: P. G. T. Beauregard, Z. B. Tower, H. G. Wright, A. A. Humphreys, John Pope, William B. Franklin, William F. Smith, Q. A. Gillmore, James B. McPherson, G. W. C. Lee, Godfrey Weitzel, John G. Parke, G. K. Warren, Kirby Smith, and George G. Meade. It is doubtful if a proportionate number of equally distinguished leaders of troops could be picked out of the one hundred and eighty officers of cavalry or the two hundred and ten officers of artillery; it could not be done from the three hundred and forty officers of infantry.

The Visitors of 1886 have tabulated bequests and donations to a number of colleges for the decade 1876-85, for the purpose of showing that West Point has not been treated so liberally as the civic institutions. The comparison is misleading. During the ten years Harvard received \$2,303,000; Yale, \$1,322,000; Columbia, \$1,216,000; the University of California, \$1,090,000. These were additions to the endowments: only the interest on these sums could be spent. During the same decade West Point received \$3,161,207 from Congress for its current expenses. The annual appropriation bill averages five per cent. on \$6,000,000, which may be deemed a pretty fair endowment. The ordinary salaries of their grades received by the eight assistant professors and the thirty-eight instructors form no part of the Military Academy appropriation bills, which alone are considered in the above statement; those salaries are provided in the army appropriation bills. Extra

expenses are cheerfully voted by Congress ; the last appropriation bill gives the Academy more than \$130,000 for additions to its buildings.

Congress votes about \$160,000 a year to pay salaries to the cadets. There is no reason for this. The cadets come from a richer class of families than the students at Princeton and Yale and Amherst. The cadet is guaranteed a situation as soon as he graduates, with a salary sufficient for a young man at the start, and certain to increase, supplemented with the comforts of the retired list. In a period of peace, the army officer is in one of the most healthful occupations to be found anywhere. He is exposed to some discomforts, but not to a high death-rate, and there is some social consideration to make his place desirable.

The Visitors of 1886 are right in thinking, as General Grant did, that more young men ought to have a military education ; that the interests of the country would be promoted thereby. The \$160,000 a year now paid to cadets would support another military school, say at Rock Island, Illinois, and the government could pick its second lieutenants from a larger body of cadets.

The government now gets its officers, mainly, by an interminable series of blackboard exercises. Many qualities besides scholarship are essential in an officer, but the means for ascertaining these are limited. When Congressmen in all cases selected cadets there was some chance that a part of them might have been picked out for their brightness, manliness, courage, or spirit of enterprise and adventure. But it is becoming common for Congressmen to give their appointments to the successful youths in competitive examinations. The boy who gets a nomination as cadet because he did five examples in arithmetic right instead of four goes to the Military Academy, and is examined some more for admission. Six months later he is examined some more, and perhaps dropped. If not, he is examined occasionally for the next three and a half years, and if he pulls through he gets a commission. He may be conspicuously lacking in some of the most important elements of an officer. As the West Point improvement on the decalogue has rather more than four hundred commandments, for the violation of each of which a certain number of demerits is charged against the cadet, it is possible that some excellent material for officers has been lost to the army because it was not quite pliant enough.

The ranks of the army have few attractions for young men of some intelligence and force, such as would contribute greatly to the value of the army. From two-thirds to three-fourths of the candidates for enlistment are rejected as physically or morally unfit. Of those who are accepted, about fifteen per cent. desert every year ; in the white regiments the percentage of desertion is about twenty ; in the Fourth Cavalry in a

recent year one-quarter of the men deserted. The great gulf that must be fixed between the enlisted man and the officer is practically bridgeless: occasionally an enlisted man gets a commission; occasionally also an enlisted man is struck by lightning. If the officers were taken from the army, the army would get hundreds of recruits of a very different character from that of the men who now make up the rank and file. After youths, enlisted younger than the present regulations permit, had served in the army one, two, or three years, those who had in them the material for officers would give some evidence of the fact more convincing than the ability to pass a competitive examination in common-school branches. Let the young men selected for officers after service in the army be sent for four or five years to the Military Academy for a higher English and a professional education: the result would be a corps of officers obtained by natural selection, and a body of enlisted men always containing a considerable number of intelligent and ambitious youths fit to be made into officers.

The present system of assigning second lieutenants to the several branches of the army is vicious. Where the graduates of the Military Academy are concerned, it seems to have been invented by a school-master with no idea beyond that of marks and rewards of merit. The graduates are allowed to choose their corps, as vacancies permit, in the order of their class standing. So far as this puts the most promising students in the engineer corps, it is good; further than that, it is bad. Naturally, the men who are allowed the first choice go into the engineer corps: it is the scientific branch of the army; the officers are stationed in the cities and large towns; a corps that has a brigadier-general and forty-two field-officers to only sixty-six captains and lieutenants of course offers a much more rapid promotion than a corps that has only seventy-five field-officers and nearly eight hundred captains and lieutenants. The senior captain of engineers has been a captain only thirteen years; the senior captain of infantry has been a captain twenty-three years, and ninety-nine captains of infantry are senior to the senior captain of engineers. Since the ordnance service was separated from the artillery the latter is not much, if any, more scientific than the cavalry and infantry, but it is uniformly preferred: the artillery does not serve on the frontier; occasionally a young man who might choose the artillery chooses the cavalry in order to go out on the plains, but the American system offers rewards only for longevity, not for daring or enterprise, and service in the artillery is conducive to longevity. The first promotion comes sooner in artillery than in other branches of the service, because there are one hundred and thirty first lieutenants to sixty second lieutenants. Besides, there are only four



captains waiting for each vacancy in the rank of major, instead of ten as in the infantry. Not unnaturally, the artillery gets the preference. Next to the artillery, sometimes in preference to it, the graduates take the cavalry. The dull men, the inattentive men, the men who narrowly escape being dropped from their classes, become second lieutenants of infantry because they cannot get into any other corps. If a cadet be dropped for misconduct or inability to learn his lessons and through political influence get appointed a second lieutenant one or two years in advance of the members of his class who stuck to their work and entered the army by the front door, he is assigned to the infantry. If a non-commissioned officer, necessarily of a rather limited education, and also necessarily rather old for study, get a commission, he is assigned to the infantry. If the President give a commission to a young man who has had no military training or education whatever, but whose father is the chairman of the central committee of his State, the young man is of course assigned to the infantry. Anything is good enough for the infantry. The plain truth is that in any war the infantry is the main part of the army. The cavalry and artillery are merely assistants to the infantry. It is with the infantry that war must be carried on, and the infantry is the best school for general officers. Yet according to our practice it does not matter much about infantry officers: the stupid men and the men whose education and training have been neglected are good enough for infantry officers. The army register of 1886 shows that the forty regiments of our army had fifteen hundred and fifty-one officers, of whom not quite half—seven hundred and forty-five—were graduates of the Military Academy; three hundred and eighty-two came from the volunteer army, two hundred and sixty-three from civil life, and one hundred and sixty-one from the ranks of the regular army.

Over sixty per cent. of the cavalry officers came from the Academy, over sixty-nine per cent. of the artillery officers had the same advantage, and only thirty-five per cent. of the infantry officers are from West Point. It will probably surprise general readers to learn that of two hundred and fifty captains of infantry only thirteen were graduates of West Point; one hundred and fifty-eight came from the volunteers, twenty-five from civil life, and fifty-four from the ranks. Of civilian appointees there were one hundred and ninety-seven in the infantry, twenty-seven in the cavalry, and thirty in the artillery. Of officers promoted from the ranks there were one hundred and twelve in the infantry, thirty-eight in the cavalry, and only eleven in the artillery. Of first lieutenants of infantry one hundred and twenty are graduates, seventy-seven came from the volunteers, twenty-five from the ranks, and seventy-six from civil life. Of second lieutenants of infantry one

hundred and thirty-eight are graduates, one came from the volunteers, thirty-two from the ranks, and fifty-nine from civil life. In 1886 the First, Thirteenth, and Twentieth Infantry had no West Point graduate above the rank of first lieutenant, and the Second had none above the rank of captain.

The artillery is the *corps d'élite* of the army. All its colonels, four of its five lieutenant-colonels, two-thirds of its majors, and almost one-third of its captains, are from West Point. The Military Academy furnished ninety-three out of one hundred and thirty first lieutenants and fifty-nine out of sixty second lieutenants. What seems to be the result of this discrimination in favor of the artillery? Prof. Michie, an officer of the army, a graduate of and the senior professor in the Military Academy, informs the public through *The Journal of the Military Service Institution* that the artillery "has steadily deteriorated since the close of the civil war," and is "inactive, inefficient, and wholly unskilled in the use of the modern armament."

An extremely bad form of organization is responsible for much of this, and the practice of keeping the artillery troops cooped up in the coast fortifications and giving ten out of every twelve batteries the weapons of infantry instead of artillery is also responsible; but it is impossible wholly to acquit the officers. If the artillery be the branch of the service characterized by dull routine and stagnation, it ought not to be preferred to the cavalry and infantry by so many graduates of West Point; and if it be the branch of the service that really has the least important functions to perform, why does not the War Department see to it that the comparatively uneducated sergeants who get commissioned and the ready-made officers from civil life are assigned to the artillery regiments, and that the highly-educated young officers from the Military Academy are assigned to the infantry, which really has some military functions to perform in the Indian country and along the Mexican frontier?

These questions suggest, and in fact are partly answered by, a consideration of our system of promotion. This admirable system of rewards for demerit seems to have been invented by some army officers who had more confidence in their physical vigor than in their ability to achieve distinction. Up to the grade of colonel, promotion is rigidly by seniority. Except the generals, higher rank in our army is achieved by existence,—not by meritorious conduct. No daring exploit, no professional accomplishments, can assist a second lieutenant in his excellent ambition to command a company or a battalion. No degree of indolence or inefficiency that falls short of a crime punished by sentence of court-martial can retard his promotion.

When General Miles had to pursue Geronimo he picked out half a dozen captains and lieutenants to lead the small bodies of troops sent into the mountains after the Indians. These officers were selected for their merits. They amply justified their selection. They manifested courage and endurance; they proved themselves capable of seizing every opportunity and making the most of every advantage; they had pluck and the admirable quality of being able to inspire their men with their own zeal; they exposed themselves to dangers worse than death. Their reward consists in a consciousness of duty well done and honorable mention in the report of General Miles. They will not be advanced in rank any faster than the captains and lieutenants whom General Miles would not have cared to send out after the Indians. The senior of the captains will have to wait for forty-seven captains who stand above him on the list to be promoted, retired, or removed by death, before he can reach the grade of major. As this will take about fifteen years, he will probably never get his promotion.

It would be interesting to observe what effect it would have on the army if the men who distinguished themselves in this campaign were advanced to the first vacancies occurring in the grades above them. The "honor men" of the Military Academy would not bury themselves in the casemates that are supposed to guard the harbors of Boston and New York; they would seek assignments to the regiments that had something to do and in which there would be some opportunity of distinguishing themselves.

But, fortunately, courage and enterprise and skill are to be had though they be not rewarded even by the unsubstantial compliment of a brevet commission, which Congress denies to officers who distinguish themselves in Indian warfare. On public grounds the most serious objection to the present system of promotion is that it fills all the higher grades of the army with old men. Our army is larger than is needed for an Indian police; it is not large enough for war. Its size is fixed with a view to its utility as a nucleus for a great volunteer army in the event of war. But its value as a nucleus is greatly impaired by the fact that in the event of war it would have to be thoroughly re-officered. There would be no officers then to spare for volunteer regiments without impairing the efficiency of the regular force. If any one will look over the army register of 1860, he will be struck with the fact that very few of the generals and colonels of the old army took any part in the civil war. Most of the names he recognizes as those of men who distinguished themselves between 1861 and 1865 he finds among the majors, captains, and lieutenants. If war should come now or at any future time while the seniority system of promotion is rigidly maintained, our

experience in 1861 will be repeated. We shall have to retire all our officers who have been accustomed to commands of some size and responsibility, and put divisions under the command of men who never had sixty-five men under their orders at once, and make colonels out of men whose area of authority has embraced fifteen non-commissioned officers and privates.

It is not enough that an officer should have a clear head and reasonably good health. This may be enough for a departmental staff; but for the field, for deeds of dash and hazard, for quickness of movement and nerve in taking chances, something of the physical elasticity and mental temperament of youth or the prime of manhood is necessary. So far as the conduct and well-being of the troops are concerned, more depends upon the captains and lieutenants, with whom the enlisted men come in contact and whose influence they feel constantly, than upon the higher officers. Company officers of middle age, or somewhat past that, are not exactly the men to infuse the ranks with nerve and energy. Of our ten generals, leaving out the staff corps, one is close to sixty-four, one is a little past sixty, and the rest range from fifty-three to sixty, except one, who is in his forty-eighth year, and he was the man that directed the late Apache campaign. At twenty-five he was a major-general of volunteers. Our colonels range from fifty-three to sixty-three, and will while the present system lasts. Most of these men would drop out at once if there were campaigning to do. Our lieutenant-colonels and majors range from forty-five to fifty-five, and the captains, who have to serve right with the soldiers and share their dangers and hardships in case of war, are middle-aged gentlemen averaging forty-three or above that. There are more lieutenants above forty than there are captains under that age.

Compare these ages with those of men who have distinguished themselves in command of troops in actual service. Washington received the sword of Cornwallis at the age of forty-nine, and Lafayette was twenty-four when he led the assault on Yorktown. Nathaniel Greene was forty-one and Henry Knox only thirty-three when the war of independence closed. Andrew Jackson was forty-eight at New Orleans, Oliver Hazard Perry twenty-eight at the battle of Lake Erie, and Winfield Scott twenty-nine when our second war with England closed. Clive conquered India and died at forty-nine. Napoleon and Wellington were forty-six at Waterloo. Murat and Ney died at forty-four and forty-six respectively, and Soult was of about the same age. Grant was forty-three when Lee surrendered. Sherman marched through Georgia at forty-four. Sheridan was only thirty-three at Winchester. Thomas was "the rock of Chickamauga" at forty-seven.

Schofield was thirty-two at Franklin. Terry captured Fort Fisher at thirty-seven. Wright was forty-three when he led the Sixth Corps up to the "death-angle" at Spottsylvania. At the battle of Gettysburg Meade was forty-eight, Hancock thirty-nine, Howard thirty-four, Gibbon thirty-six, Lee was fifty-seven, and Longstreet forty-three. Phil Kearney was killed at forty-seven, James B. McPherson at thirty-six, and "Stonewall" Jackson at thirty-nine. When the war broke out, Beauregard and Early were forty-three and J. E. B. Stuart was twenty-nine. Joseph Wheeler was a lieutenant-general of cavalry at twenty-eight. When the war closed it left Wesley Merritt twenty-nine, Grierson twenty-eight, Custer and Miles twenty-six, and Ranald S. Mackenzie only twenty-five. These youngsters were generals.

The efficiency of the army requires that a considerable number of young and active men should hold high commands. This means that officers who do not get out of the lower grades should be retired considerably below the age of sixty-four. But the practice of filling all the responsible positions of the army with elderly men who would have to retire at once in case of war could be broken up by allowing the President to appoint officers without regard to seniority. He is not fettered by seniority in selecting generals: he should not be in selecting colonels or majors.

The objection to this is obvious: it would set officers and their friends to working for promotions by the use of "influence." The objection is not half so serious as the present difficulty. Besides, officers might easily be recommended for promotion by boards created from time to time for the selection of the most meritorious officers to be advanced.

The army suffers for want of attention to it and interest in it by the nation at large; the nation suffers to the extent that this severance of sympathy impairs the efficiency of the army and represses the military impulses of the people, who rely on themselves instead of a standing army in the event of war; the militia suffers for lack of the spirit and discipline that would be infused into it by a connection with the regular army. For these evils a remedy would be found in territorializing the army and making the militia regiments reserve battalions of the regular regiments. This would also afford the means of introducing the three- or four-battalion formation into our infantry without enlarging the army. The ten companies of each infantry regiment should be consolidated into eight, and these eight divided into two battalions. The other battalions should be militia regiments. Without taking the trouble to apportion the regiments to the several sections of the country with an exact regard to population, the following



arrangement will serve as a suggestion. Let the 1st infantry be known as the 1st and 2d battalions of the 1st New England regiment, and be recruited in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut. A regiment of Maine militia would be the 3d battalion, and a 4th battalion might be supplied by the militia of the other States, though this would probably prove impracticable, and it would be better for each of the four States to furnish one regiment of militia as a battalion attached to this regiment. The 2d infantry would be the first two battalions of the 2d New England regiment, and would be recruited from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. A regiment of Massachusetts militia would be the 3d battalion, and a regiment of Rhode Island militia the 4th battalion. The 3d and 4th regiments would be known as the 1st and 2d battalions, respectively, of the 3d and 4th New York regiments, and the New York militia would furnish the four reserve battalions for these two regiments. In the same way the 5th and 6th infantry would be Pennsylvania regiments, the 7th would be furnished by New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, the 8th by Virginia and West Virginia, the 9th by the two Carolinas, the 10th by Georgia and Florida, the 11th infantry might be the Gulf regiment, and would be recruited in Alabama and Mississippi, the 12th, recruited in Louisiana and Arkansas, might be the Lower Mississippi regiment, the 13th would be the Texas regiment, the 14th and 15th would come from Kentucky and Tennessee, the 16th from Ohio, the 17th from Indiana, the 18th and 19th from Illinois, the 20th from Missouri, the 21st from Michigan, the 22d from Iowa, the 23d, or Upper Mississippi regiment, from Minnesota and Wisconsin, the 24th from Kansas and Nebraska, and the 25th from the Territories and the Pacific coast. This does not provide for two regiments of colored troops. White men and black men serve side by side on our men-of-war, and they may eventually serve in the same regiment, if not the same company, in our army. If the present arrangement is to be maintained, it can be done without preventing the territorialization of the army. If there were not two regiments of colored troops in the infantry and two in the cavalry, the graduates of West Point might not have such a marked preference for the artillery, in which there are no colored troops, as they now have.

Several good results would follow the territorialization of the army. The people would feel an interest in the army that they never have felt in the regular establishment. The army would feel itself to be a part of the nation, as it does not feel now. The militia would be improved in prestige and discipline: it would be more military and less of a lark. There would be a friendly rivalry between regiments from different sections of the country and commonly known by geographical names,

that could not fail to improve the spirit and efficiency of the organizations. Above all else, the army would really be a framework about which to build a great volunteer force. By calling out the militia regiments battalioned with the regiments of the line the fifty battalions of the latter could be increased to one hundred or one hundred and fifty battalions without a particle of change in the organization, and every two or three militia battalions would serve with two regular battalions.

Except a few troops to keep some small bands of possibly hostile Indians in order, it is not worth while for us to keep up any army unless we keep up one that is always ready for service, and that is so organized and officered as to be not only constantly efficient for action by itself, but also in the best condition to leaven the great force of volunteers on which we must chiefly rely in war so long as we happily find it needless to support a large standing army.

*Fred. Perry Powers.*

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### GOLDEN NOON.

**A** DONIS has come back ; cicadas sing,  
Though twelve months silent, for July is here ;  
And thou, O Aphrodite, void of fear,  
Dost sport in gold ; and thou, gold-hearted thing,  
O water-lily, drink'st (where reapers fling  
Their serried loads of many a barbèd spear)  
The scent of new-mown hay ; and vague, yet near,  
The voices of the noonday chirpers ring :

The sky is blue and gold and pearl-besprent,  
High blazes color, larkspur, poppy, pink ;  
The air is incense ; it is joy to live :  
Yet only soulless creatures are content.

Alas ! in all this splendor we **MUST** think,  
Beyond this beauty what has earth to give ?

*Maurice F. Egan.*

## THE FARRIER LASS O' PIPING PEBWORTH.

**H**UMFREY LEMON, meeting Bered Turnip, before the "Red Deer," doth speak as follows :

Whom have we here? Well, well, by my troth! 'tis none other than Bered Turnip, the farrier, as I do live! Come for an alms-drink, comrade. Would I had as many gold-pieces as we have burnt alnights i' this very tavern! And is it thus we meet after all these years? It doth seem but yesterday that we supped under this very roof as juvenals. Dost thou mind thee o' the night that we gave old Gammer Lick-the-Dish a bath in his own sack, for that he served us in a foul jerkin? By'r laykin, those were days!—Well, well! to meet thee thus! Though, believe it or not, as thou wilt, I had such a pricking i' my thumbs but an hour gone that I was of a mind to roar you like any babe with a pin in his swaddling-bands. Thou wast my beau-peer i' those times; and we are kin by profession, moreover. How be Mistress Turnip and thy eight lads? Ha! ha! Dost remember how old Anthony Butter,—him who was gardener at Amhurst Castle, ye mind,—dost thou remember in what spite he held thee because o' those eight little salads o' thine? A always said a married with an eye to a's posterity; and o' my word a's been cock-eyed e'er since, for's posterity has e'er kept him on the lookout: never chick or child hath Mistress Butter given him.

Quoth he to me one day, a-setting of 's chin in 's thumb and forefinger (thou mind'st his solemn ways),—quoth he to me, "Lemon," quoth he, "would I knew why the Lord doth seem to look with a more bounteous favor on such as are farriers than on such as be followers of other trades; for methinks, what with thee, and Turnip, and Job Long-pate who bides in Dancing Marston, England will owe the chief o' her future population to blacksmiths." I quoth, to humor him, quoth I, "Belike, Master Butter," quoth I, "the Almighty hath gotten wisdom by experience, and doth purpose to put no further trust in Gardeners." Whereat he waxed so wrathful that for the sake o' my breeches I took to my heels. But, Lord! it doth seem as though a had a spite against th' very children o' others. Thou mindest my Keren?—the goujer? 'Twill not stick i' my old pate how that thou hast not been in these parts since my Keren could 'a' walked under a blackberry-bramble without so much as tousling her tresses. Well, a grew up a likely lass, I can tell thee! Sure thou mindest why we—

my wife and I—did come to call her Keren? Go to! Thou dost! 'Tis the jest o' th' place to this day. Well, then, if thou dost not, I'll be at the pains o' telling thee; for methinks 'twas a wise thought. We did christen her Keren-Happuch; "for," quoth my wife, "when that we be pleased with her we can call her Keren,—which is as sweet-sounding a name as a maid can have; and, on the other hand, when we be wroth with her we can call her Happuch,—which sure would be a rough name even for thy trotting mare Bellibone." Ha! ha! And thereby, comrade, hangs another tale, as Master Shakespeare was wont to say. My wife, thou must know, hath e'er been a loyal admirer o' our gracious Queen, and it comes to her ears one day as how her majesty did ride a-horseback most excellent well. Naught would do but that I must let Mistress Lemon mount for a ride upon my gray mare Bellibone. Now, Bellibone, though as willing a nag as ever ambled, did think far more o' getting to her journey's end than o' the manner in which she did accomplish the journey; and, I will say, a trotted as though a was for breaking th' stones on th' Queen's highway, instead o' getting o'er 'em. Well, I did what I could to dissuade Mistress Lemon from her enterprise, but a was as firm as one o' my surest-driven nails in a new shoe. So a let her go. Couldst thou but 'a' seen her when she was returned, an hour after! Ha! ha! ha! a was for breaking my head with my own pincers.

"Dost thou call that devil's-riding-horse 'Bellibone'?" quoth she, with what breath there was left to her. "By my troth, I think she hath not another bone in her whole body besides her backbone!"

But I spake o' Keren. Thou knowest that even as a lass she had a sharp tongue o' her own,—as keen as a holly leaf, by my troth. So be it. 'Twas one day nigh unto Martlemas that old Butter did undertake to chide her for conducting herself after the manner o' a lad rather than o' a lass.

Quoth she to him, a-setting of her little black pate to one side, and of her little brown arms akimbo,—quoth she, "Since the Lord hath not made me a lad," quoth she, "I cannot more than act like one; and so I will do!"

Quoth he, "Thou hast a sour name, a bitter tongue, and a peppery temper, jade; and the two last be not gifts o' the Lord."

"And thou," quoth she, "hast a mustard conceit, for right sure am I that 'tis big enough for a goose to roost in! And, whether th' Lord hath given it to thee or not, I'm glad I have't not!" quoth she. For she had heard it read, in some meeting whither her mother would sometimes take her, of how the fowls o' the air did lodge i' th' branches o' the mustard-plant. Well, by'r laykin, th' village hath ne'er forgot

that to this day; and that I'll prove thee when we be through drinking!

What hath become o' her? Go to! Sure thou knowest that? Well, well, 'tis a tale to make a play of. I've often thought, had Master Shakespeare known of 't, how he would 'a' fashioned it into a jolly play. Tell thee of 't? What! art in earnest? By the mass, then, thou must drink again. Come, fill up; fill up. What there! a cup o' the amber drink for Master Turnip!

Let me see: how old was th' lass when thou didst set forth on thy jauntings? Some two years, methinks. And she was fourteen on the first day o' March i' that year wherein she did sauce old Butter with some o's own wit for gibing at her for a tomboy. O' my word, man, th' old fellow was not far i' th' wrong. If e'er th' angel o' life did make an error i' th' distributing o' souls, 'twas on the night Keren was brought into this world. And a say that with a cause, moreover. For th' same night, mark you, one Mistress Mouldy, over the way, was brought to bed o' a man-child. That's neither here nor there. Herein doth lie the singularity. That child did grow up to knit stockings i' th' door-way like any wench: Peter Mouldy's th' name, and a plays a part i' th' story I'm about to relate to thee. Ne'er in all thy travels hast thou e'er seen so crack-brain a wench as my Keren! Lord! it set thy head to swimming did she but enter a room. She had no more stability o' motion than a merry-go-round; and she was that brown, a bun looked pale i' th' comparison when she did lift it to her mouth to eat it. A strapping jade, and strong as any lad o' her age i' th' village. In her seeming she took neither after her mother nor after me; though she was a comely wench as wenches go,—hair as black as a January night in stormy weather, and eyes as big and as bright and as yellow (o' my word)—as yellow as two crown pieces! They looked out from under her thick eyebrows like sunlight peeping from a heavy cloud. And she was made like a lad for suppleness. Taller than her mother by head and shoulders, and within a full inch o' my forelock. By'r laykin! how she could sing, too! She would troll thee a ditty i' th' voice o' a six-foot stripling, but, for a' that, as sweet as bells far away on a still noon in summer-tide. And she was always getting hold o' saucy songs and putting them to tunes o' her own invention. A could 'a' had aye the lads i' th' village, had a wanted 'em; but, Lord! a had one sweetheart one day, and another the next, till they were one and all for murdering or marrying her. But she would none o' 'em. 'Twas one summer's day, her mother being gone to th' village, that she did set about to brew some sack; and as she did stand by the big pot while it cooled, to see that naught fell into 't, up comes Master Peter Mouldy,



with his knitting, and grins at her across the caldron, after the fashion o' a horse eating briers. She not noticing him, quoth he,—

“Good-morrow, sweet Mistress Lemon.”

Saith she, not looking at him,—

“Thou liest.”

“How, mistress?” saith he, with his mouth as wide as a church door on a Sunday.

“Why, for calling a lemon sweet,” saith she, “when all the world doth know that it is sour.”

Thereat he did fall a-grinning again.

“Sweet, sweet Mistress Keren,” quoth he, “’tis thee I praise, and not thy name. And I will wager that thou art not sour Mistress Keren.”

“How wilt thou find out, either to lose or to win thy wager?” quoth she.

“Thus!” quoth he. And, o’ my word, the homespun got his arms about her, knitting and all (though I would ’a’ laid two cows and a lamb they couldn’t ’a’ reached about her pretty waist), and smacked her right heartily full on her red mouth.

Well, comrade, that something would happen I knew full well; but when she did up with him by the seat o’ his breeches and the collar o’ his jerkin and did souse him head first into the pot o’ sack, methought I would ’a’ burst in sunder, like Judas Iscariot (meaning no’ blasphemy).

And when he was climbed out spluttering and white with terror, she did fish out his hat with his big knitting-needles, and did set it upon his head, and did thrust him outside, and did shut the door in ’s face. But never a word said she, from first to last. Then methought in verity I would ’a’ split in twain from top to toe, like the veil o’ the temple (meaning no blasphemy, as I will swear on th’ book). And when she caught sight o’ me she too fell a-laughing, and quoth she to me, “I have spoiled a good brew for thee, father, but ’twas worth the paying for.” And therewith she did out with the worth o’ the sack from her purse, which she always carried in her bosom, after a fashion inherited from her mother, and counted down the silver into my hand. I took it, for I ever strove to bring up my children in the ways o’ honesty; and certes she had spoiled the contents o’ the caldron by turning it into a bath-tub for Master Mouldy. Well, ’twas th’ talk o’ th’ village for full a month: scarce did young Mouldy dare put out his nose from behind the lattice o’ his mother’s cottage. But th’ other lads seemed to fall more daft about the lass than aye afore.

Now, my wife’s sister had a daughter, called Ruth, and in all things

was she most different from my Keren. A'd a head as yellow as Keren's eyes, and eyes as brown as Keren's skin, and a skin as white as Keren's teeth; and a was slim and tender-looking, like a primrose that hath but just ventured out on a day in early spring. Moreover, she was a timid, sweet-voiced creature,—the kind o' wench that makes even a weak man feel strong, ye mind, comrade. But a was ne'er o'er-civil to my lass. Neither did Keren waste much love upon her: she said from th' very start that th' hussy had a sly tongue; "and a sly tongue," saith she, "doth ever mate with a false heart," saith she; "and from such a marriage what offspring can ye look for, unless it be for mischief?" saith she.

They had not much to do the one with the other, however, until the coming of Robert Hacket to Pebworth. And a was as fine a lad as e'er caused a lass to don her Sunday kirtle on a Saturday. 'Twas said as how he had met with Ruth while that she was on a visit to her aunt in Dancing Marston, and that he had come to Pebworth to wed with her. All would 'a' been well, had not it come to Keren's ears how that Mistress Ruth said that she would bring Master Hacket to see her cousin Keren, but that she did not want her sweetheart to be out with her family ere that he had married into it; meaning neither more nor less than that my Keren was a shame unto her name by reason o' her romping ways.

"The cat!" quoth Keren, waxing as red as any damask rose for very anger; "the little, spiteful cat! But I'll cut her claws for her! Do thou bide and mark me, father. Ay, I'll serve her and her Robert in such wise they'll go to their graves remembering."

Now, 'twas the very next day that the lads and lasses o' the village did crown her harvest-queen, and all Bidford was out to see 't. And very queen she looked, too, borne aloft in a throne made all o' dark red roses, and her dark curls crowned with a wreath o' corn and o' poppies, that shined in the sunlight like to gold strewn all with rubies. She wore a new kirtle of white wool, and her brown throat rose from her white kerchief like as a frozen wood-dove's dusky breast doth peep from new-fallen snow.

And Mistress Ruth walked beside her as one o' her maids o' honor. And they twain did remind me of naught so much as of a lamb trotting by the side of a forest doe,—the one so meek and white, and the other so free and brown, with great eyes ever moving, and head aloft.

There, moreover, walked Master Hacket. He was as brown as my Keren, and nearly half as tall again; and he had eyes like pools o' water under a night heaven, wherein two stars have drowned themselves, as 'twere, and brows as black and straight as a sweep o' cloud across an

evening sky. Ruth walked at his side, all glittering with her unbound hair, like to a sunbeam that follows a dark stream. And I saw that they talked together, and nodded as though agreeing on something, and looked together at my lass where she sat on her flower-throne with her poppy-crown, and her lips like poppies. And all at once she turned and saw them, and her lips parted over her white teeth in a sudden smile, as when a kirtle o' red silk doth tear over a white petticoat beneath; and she turned away; but I could see that she laughed in her brown throat, as a bird sings sometimes for its own hearkening ere trolling for the whole forest. So I said to myself, "'Ware, 'ware, my little spring lamb: there is trouble ahead for thee. Thou wilt not win thy Boaz so easily as thou dost think, my little Ruth."

Now, when they were come to the fields, and the maids seated under some elm-trees, and all the lads fallen to 't with their sickles, while that they were reaping the glistening corn my Keren doth leap to her feet, and she calls out,—

"I know not the name o' yonder man, but I do know that I can give him a lesson in reaping!"

So forthwith up jumps she, and, striding out into the sunlit meadow, jerks young Hacket's sickle from his hand, and, having turned back the sleeves o' her smock, stands well upon her shapely legs and begins to reap.

Now, methought I had ne'er in all my life seen anything more pleasing to look upon. The wind blew down her thick locks about her, so that she was wrapped in a mantle worthy any queen; while with every sweep o' her strong brown arms the tumbling grain did fall like gold about her, so that she seemed to be trampling upon her treasures after a manner truly royal. Also a red came into her shadowy cheeks, like as though a scarlet flower tossed into a clear brown stream should rise slowly upward beneath the limpid surface and shine a-through. And all at once she ceased, and came back towards the young man, and returned his sickle unto him. And she said, smiling,—

"Take thou thy blade, for I have not only reaped the grain, but I have reaped the reward of my bragging as well." And, behold! when I was come up to them with a drink o' water in a gourd, there was the blood falling down upon her white kirtle, as though the poppies in her crown had melted in the sunlight and did stain her garment.

He did cry out, saying, "O' my word, lass, thou art deeply hurt. Let me but look at it."

She saith unto him (winding her arm about in her long hair), "Nay, 'tis nothing, and belike if thou look upon it 'twill spoil thy dinner: so here's to thy health, and my father will bind it for me."

Then, when we were retired again into the shade, and I had torn a strip off of her kirtle wherewith to stanch the blood, she laughed outright, and saith,—

“By my troth, father! I do verily believe thou thinkest me awkward without a purpose.”

“Purpose!” saith I; for I could not believe my ears. “How dost thou mean,—purpose?”

“That’s neither here nor there,” saith she, still laughing. “But I’ll lay thee my heifer, father, that Mistress Ruth’s sweetheart cometh on the morrow to inquire after Mistress Ruth’s cousin Keren.”

Wherewith she did make me a deep courtesy, and did get her back to the other lasses ere I could reply.

Well, as I live, and must some day die, and do hope when I do die to get to heaven, I was so taken aback with the hussy’s cunning I could do naught but stand and stare after her for some minutes.

And on the morrow he did come, and on the day after that he came, and yet a third day and he was under my roof again.

Then saith my wife, after that his third visit was o’er, and speaking to Keren as she sat spinning i’ th’ door-way,—

“Happuch,” saith she, “thou art serving thy cousin Ruth a very jade’s trick.”

Then, hearing as how she did call her “Happuch,” I did prick up my ears, as ’twere; for I knew there was anger brewing.

“Thou art very free with thy words to-day, mother,” quoth the maid, a-spinning very quickly.

“Not so free as thou art with thy favors to the sweetheart o’ another lass,” replied her mother.

“How dost thou know he is the sweetheart o’ another lass?” saith Keren.

“If an he be not,” quoth her mother, who, though not half so big as her child, was in no wise less valiant,—“if an he be not,” quoth she, “’tis time he were.”

“And for why?” saith Keren.

“Thou knowest as well as I do, Happuch,” saith my wife; wherewith she started my crack-brain in a fine fury.

“Why wilt thou call me that vile name, when thou knowest how it maddens me?” saith she, hurling her spindle upon the floor, and tightening both her pretty hands so that they looked like balls o’ her own brown yarn.

“For that I am not pleased with thee, Happuch,” saith her mother, with all composure, looking at the linen as she washed it, with her head cocked to one side.

"There again!" shouted my wildfire, stamping with her foot.  
"Why didst thou not call me Beelzebub and have done with 't?"

"For the reason," quoth her mother, calmly, "that neither Beel nor Zebub are suiting names for a woman, and, furthermore, that thou art not the Devil, though thou dost act like him on occasions."

"Wife, wife," put in I, seeing that the girl was like to split with rage, "speak gentler to Keren."

"To Happuch," saith she.

"Speak gentler to the girl," saith I, hoping to compromise, as 'twere.

"Happuch," saith my wife again.

"Well, well," saith I, still hoping to split the difference, so that I would have neither my wife nor my daughter upon me, "if thou wouldst only speak gentler to Keren-Happuch, thou——"

"To Happuch," saith my wife a third time; whereat the lass did bounce out o' the house without more ado, and spent that night with a friend o' her own, by name one Mistress Meg Titmouse.

"Wife," saith I unto her later, hoping to draw her into converse concerning Keren, so that I might reason with her as to her treatment o' th' lass,—*"wife,"* saith I, amiably, and, as I thought, in a manner most winsome, "wherefore didst thou speak to Keren as thou didst this morning?"

"I spake to Happuch," saith my wife, "because I did choose so to do. And as for the why o' that wherefore, though thou shouldst smirk till doomsday like a dog scratching his ear, ne'er wilt thou get it out o' me!"

Then saith I, being justly angered, as I think thou wilt admit, comrade,—saith I,—

"Thou art welcome to keep thy counsel!" saith I.

And I followed the example set me by my vixen, and did spend more than half the night at this very tavern.

Well, the next morning, as I did pass out on my way to my forge, whom should I see in the garden but my Keren and Master Robert Hacket! and if e'er a woman was possessed o' a devil, 'twas just that lass o' mine then, comrade. She had caused young Hacket to climb up into a pear-tree, and while that he was up there she did bear away the ladder by which he had mounted, and she saith to him,—

"Now, Master Robin, I am going to sing thee a song. Wilt thou listen?"

"With all my heart," saith he. So he leaned on his elbow, stretched out like a young panther along the limb o' th' tree, and looked down on her. Now, as I live, down went that jade on her knees in



the grass, and she lifts up her two pretty hands to him as though in prayer, and thus sings she (I knew the song by heart):

"Listen, Robin, while I woo:  
This world's stale with repetition:  
I'll not do as others do:  
Haste thee, love, to my tuition.  
Robin, I'll make love to you,  
As men to other maidens do.

"Oh, what eyes my Robin hath!  
April fields own no such blue;  
In the luscious aftermath  
There's no flower so fair to view.  
Robin, Robin, hear me woo:  
All my soul's in love with you!

"Robin, will you marry me?—  
Thus upon my knees I sue:  
O' my word, I'll harry thee  
Like as men their sweethearts do.  
Robin, as I live I'm true:  
Will you wed me, Robin?—Will you?"

Now, what chanced thereupon I think thou wilt agree with me, comrade, in saying it did but serve her right. Down falls he like a ripe pomewater at her side, and takes her about the waist, and sets his mouth to hers (all in a twink, comrade: thou hadst not time to shape thy mouth for a whistle ere 'twas all done, or verily my mouth had given forth something besides whistling), and saith he,—

"That will I, lass, an' if thou be not my wife ere that snail-coming new moon doth thrust out her horns, my name is not Hacket, nor will thine be!"

Now, comrade, though it doth shame me verily so to speak o' mine own flesh, I saw by her pretending to push him away that she did mightily relish his kisses; for, by my troth! had she sought to scuffle with him 'twould 'a' been as snug an encounter as when day and night wrestle for the last bit o' a June sky.

And she saith to him, feigning to scowl, "How now, thou rapsca-lion! dost thou dare?"

"Ay, ay," quoth he, "in verity I do!" quoth he. And in verity a did, too.

But just as I was consulting with the Lord how to act, He having had even a greater experience with wayward children than myself (may He pardon me if I be too free with His holy name!),—just, I say, as I

was asking Him to show me in what wise to proceed, up goes her hand, and she gives him a sound cuff o' th' ear (young Hacket's ear,—not the Lord's: may He pardon me if so it sounded), and she saith,—

"Take that, for striving to make a fool out o' an honest girl! I know thy goings on with Ruth Visor," saith she. "Thou'lt ne'er blinô me with thy pretty speecheries." And a was o'er th' palings and out o sight like a wind-blown leaf.

Then did young Hacket come to th' fence and lean upon it with both his arms, and support his chin with a thumb on either side o't, and saith he,—

"Methinks she'd 'a' made a better warrior than a wife," saith he; "but when she hath ta'en off the edge o' her warlike spirit in fighting for her freedom," saith he, "why, then," saith he, "I'll marry her!" So saith he,—every word o't. By my troth, comrade, an I had not had so much the advantage by having my nippers in my hand, I would 'a' thrashed him then and there. But, "Fair play" being my motto, and having my nippers, as I saith, I forbore; yea, I forbore, and walked away unseen of him. And, o' my word, I was much angered with myself for not being more angry with th' wench.

"For," saith I out loud, that I might be impressed by the sound as well as by the knowledge o' th' fact,—“for,” saith I, a-hammering away on a shoe for Joe Pebbles's brown nag King Edward (though I had often reasoned with Joe on account o' th' name, first because o' its irreverence, second on account o' th' horse not being that kind o' a horse, as 'twas a mare),—“for,” saith I, as I made th' shoe, saith I, “'tis sure a great wickedness to steal a lass's sweetheart away from her!” saith I. And so 'twas; but, for all I could do, I could not feel angered with the hussy.

But that day when she did fetch me my dinner, being finished, I did pull down th' sleeves o' my shirt, and wiped off my leathern apron, and quoth I to her,—

“Lass, come here and sit upon my knee.”

So she comes right willingly, being fond o' me to an extent that did oft seem to astony the mother that bore her (seeing that *she* was fond o' naught save her own way); she comes, and she perches upon my knee (as sometimes thou shalt see a hawk rest wings on a bull's back), and she kittles my throat with her long brown fingers, and hugs me about the neck (the jade! a knew I was for scolding her), and saith she,—

“Well, father, here be I.” Methinks I can hear her say it now, as soft as any little toddler come for a kiss. “Here be I,” she saith; and with that she fills all my face with her curls (the jade! a saw that in my eye which a did not care to face). “Here be I,” saith she.

"Ay," saith I, speaking in a gruff voice; "and now that here thou be," saith I, "I'll tell thee what I want of thee."

"Thou canst want naught that I will not do," saith she. (The jade! a had a way with her to 'a' made Bess herself yearn for matrimony.) But I was stanch, I was stanch, comrade. Saith I,—

"Methinks thy mother was right to speak to thee as yesternight she did," saith I. "For I saw thee strive to graft a peat-tree with a branch o' th' tree o' knowledge," saith I.

"Then," saith she, hot as my forge all in a breath, and bouncing from my knee,— "then thou wast an eavesdropper!" saith she.

"Even as the Lord afore me," saith I, not over-pleased at her sauciness. "And being in some sort thy Creator, and thou having set up for thyself an Eden in my garden," saith I, "who hath a greater right than I to watch over thee?" saith I.

Then she not answering me, thus did I continue:

"Why dost thou not take unto thyself an husband," quoth I, "to do both thyself and thy parents a credit?"

"Show me such an one," saith she, "and I do promise thee to wed him."

"There, then," quoth I, "is Davy Shorthose, the poulterer——"

"A bangled-eared buffoon as ever lived!" quoth she; "and a fool into the bargain."

"So be it," saith I; for I was set upon keeping my temper. "What dost thou say to Beryamen Pigginn, the brewer?"

"A say if ever a piggin was in sore need o' a new link, 'tis that one," saith she. "And, what's more, I'll not serve for 't," saith she.

"How then of Nanfan Speckle, the tanner?"

"A's as pied as a's name," quoth she, "both soul and body."

"There be Jezreel Spittlewig, the joiner."

"Methinks," quoth she, "if a'd do a little joining to a's own shackling body, a might hold together long enough to go through the marriage ceremony," saith she. "Howbeit, I'm not a-sure of 't."

"Well, then, Jack Stirthepot, the chair-mender."

"A'd have to stir th' pot with a witch, ere a brewed a wedding with me," quoth she.

"What sayest to Reuben Puff, the tinker?"

"If I say so much as a word to any one o' em," cried she, snatching up the pail wherein she had brought my victuals, "may thy first grandchild be born without a tongue!" saith she. And out she went.

Then quoth I to myself, quoth I, "Lemon," quoth I, "the jade's in love with th' crack,—no more, no less." And I said further, said I, "Bodykins!" said I, a-shoeing of King Edward with all my might,

"by cock and pye!" said I, "an a wants him let a have him. 'Tis more than his desert, I'll warrant," so quoth I. "And as for Dame Visor's hussy, let her learn to bridle her tongue," quoth I. And 'twas just here that wench Keren did creep up and take me about the neck, as I was a-filing of King Edward's hoof.

"Father," saith she, "I cry thee pardon if I have sauced thee; but dost not mind the rhyme thou art so fond of?"

Shoe the horse, and shoe the mare,  
But let the little colt go bare.

Seek not to chide me, father, and ne'er will my heels bring hurt to any."

Then off was she again, ere I had spat forth my mouthful o' nails to answer her.

But that evening as I came home, about the going down o' th' sun, I did hear voices i' th' kitchen, and, looking in at th' window, behold, there was hussy Ruth a-plucking of Keren by th' kirtle, and Keren a-holding of a pan o' milk above her head, as though she had half a mind to souse her cousin in 't.

And saith she, "Get to thy feet, wench. This is neither a church, nor am I th' Lord."

But th' girl (who seemed to be in trouble o' some sort) fell a-sobbing, and saith she,—

"Cousin, cousin, I know I have used thee ill, but all my joy is in him. If thou takest him from me, better didst thou take my life; for he is more to me than life."

Then quoth my lass, "Shame on thee to say it o' any man, worthy or unworthy!"

"Oh, shame enough have I, cousin!" quoth the poor wench,— "shame to 'a' lost him, and shame that I should plead with another to give him back to me!"

"Go to!" saith Keren; "go to! I have not got him to give him back to thee."

"Thou hast!" saith Ruth; "thou hast!—he is thine, soul and body,—soul and body! And thou dost not care; and I care,—oh, I care so that I know not how to word it!"

(Every word that passed between 'em is as clear in my mind as though 'twere but yesterday it all happened.)

"I say shame on thee to say so," saith my lass again.

But the wench still hung about her, and would not let go, and she saith,—

"Oh, cousin, cousin, cousin, doth it not show thee in what straits I am, that I come to thee for succor? Rather had I died, one week ago, than ask thee for thy hand though I were drowning. And sure 'tis less than thy hand for which I ask thee now, sith it be for a man who is less to thee than the littlest finger on that hand, but who is more to me than the heart in my wretched body! And a had vowed to wed me; and 'twas next month we were to be wed; and all so happy,—my father and my mother so pleased, and his folks do like me well; and my wedding gown all sewn and lain away, and the ribbons for my shoes, and some kickshaws for th' new house; and all we so glad, and all going so smooth, and we twain so loving; for, oh! he did love me the once!—he did love me the once! And now!—now!—now!" And here did she fall a-weeping in such wise that never another word could she say. And she sate down on the kitchen floor, and hid all her pretty head (for pretty 'twas, though I liked her not),—hid it all in the skirt o' her kirtle."

Then stood my lass quite still, and her face like the milk in her pan, and she looks down on th' hussy, as a horse might look down on a kitten which it hath unwitting trampled on. And she saith,—

"I would I knew whether or no thou speakest the truth!"

Then saith the wench, a-reaching up her clasped hands to heaven, —saith she,—

"May God forever curse me an I do not!"

"Take not God's name in vain," saith my lass, sharply, and went and set down her pan o' milk on the cupboard. And again she stands, slowly wiping her hands on her apron, and looking down at th' girl, who hath once more covered all her face in her petticoat. And by and by she saith to her,—

"What is 't thou wouldst have me do?"

"Give me back my Robin! give me back my Robin!" saith the maid.

"Thou art welcome to him for me," saith Keren.

Then fell the maid a-weeping more bitterly than ever, and she huddled herself on the hard floor, like a young bird that hath fallen out o' its nest, and sobbed piteously. And presently gets she to her feet without a word, still a-hiding of her face in her kirtle, and turns to go, a-feeling her way with one o' her little hands. But when she hath reached th' door, and hath got one foot on the threshold, up strides that lass o' mine, and, taking her by the arm, swings her back into th' room. And she makes her sit down on a settle and take down her kirtle from her face. And while she is snooding up her ruffled locks, she saith unto her,—



"Thou art a little fool to cry so: dost hear? What! at it again? Well, well, God patience me! What's a body to do with such a little ninny? There! dry your eyes. Ye shall have your Robin, never fear. God-a-mercy! at what art blubbering now?" But down slipped Ruth on her knees, and caught Keren about hers, and she saith unto her,—

"Heaven bless thee! thou art a good woman! May Heaven forgive me for all such words as e'er I have said against thee! Bless thee! bless thee!"

"Bodykins," saith my lass (having learned some round oaths from me, I do grieve to say),—"bodykins!" saith she, "wilt a-heer th' lass? I say scamper, scamper; my father 'll be coming home to sup ere long, and I would not he found thee thus. Away with thee! And fret no more: dost hear? If I hear that thou hast moped any farther from this hour on, I'll not answer either for my doings or for those o' others: dost hear? Now scamper!" And scamper a did, like a hare with th' hounds upon 't.

So full was I o' praising my lass on her good havior, that I had got me from th' lattice and was half in at the door ere I saw what had befallen.

There was my madcap, comrade, down on her knees afore the settle, wi' both hands gripped in her thick locks, and her head bent forward on th' wooden seat. And she made no sound, neither uttered she any word, but a shook like water when a heavy weight rolls past. And a drew long breaths ever and anon, like one that hath been half drowned and is coming back to life. And I knew then, I knew then, comrade. I had thought a loved th' boy; and I knew then. So I got me out, without making any clatter, and I sat me down on a bench outside th' kitchen door to think 't over; and, by cock and pye, man, ne'er a thought could I think for th' tears in my eyes. Th' poor lass! th' poor lass! It fetches th' salt into my een now to think on 't. Well, well, what's past is past, and God himself cannot undo 't; and what's coming's coming, and God wunnot hinder it an he could: so there's an end on 't. Fill up, man, fill up! What there, I say! Joel! I say! A quart o' sack for Master Turnip.

Well, when I had thought it well o'er, I did determine to say naught to th' lass whatsoever; neither did I; but meseems I was bound to o'er-hear heart-breaking words atween somebody, for th' very next day, as I was henting th' style as leads into th' lane (thou knowest the lane I mean, comrade: 't lies atween Cowslip Meadow and th' pool i' th' hollow,—Sweethearts' Way, they call 't)—well, as I was getting o'er th' style, as I had just got me o'er by one leg,—after this fashion, ye mind:

as though this chair here were th' style, and yonder chimney-place th' lane,—Sweethearts' Way, ye mind,—well, as a was half over, and Mumble, th' turnspit pup, half under, as 'twere, I heard voices,—voices, comrade,—one o' them th' voice o' that lass o' mine, and t'other th' voice o' young Hacket.

"Here be a coil," say I. "What's to do?"

Now, the pup seemed to be filled with the spirit o' th' Lord all on a sudden, after th' fashion o' th' talking jackass i' th' Scriptures; for if a didna talk a did th' next thing to 't: a tried to. And after pulling at my heels like as though a fiend had got him, a scuttles into th' thicket, for no cause, as I could see, but to give me th' benefit o' example. So in goes I after him. Scarce was I settled, with a bramble down th' back o' my neck, and some honey-bees at work too nigh to my legs for my peace o' mind, when they come, and both a-chattering at th' same time like two magpies with slit tongues.

"Thou didst!" quoth he. "That did I not!" quoth she. "Thou didst, and I can prove 't on thee!" quoth he, louder than afore. "I tell thee I did not, and thou canst sooner prove that Bidford Mill turns the Avon, than that I did!" quoth she. "Wilt thou stand there and tell me i' th' eyes that thou hast so oft looked love into," quoth he, like a man choked with spleen, "I say, wilt thou, Keren Lemon, stand there and face me, Robert Hacket, and say thou hast ne'er given me reason to believe that thou didst love me?" quoth he. "No more cause than I've given to twenty better than thee!" quoth she. "Shame on thee to say 't, thou bold-faced jig!" saith he; "shame on thee, I say! and so will say all honest folk when I tell 'em o' 't." "An thou tell it, the more fool thou," saith she; and a draws up her red lips into a circle as though a'd had a draw-string in 'em, and a stands and looks at him as a used to stand and look at her dam when she chid her for a romp. Then all on a sudden, with such a nimbleness as took away my breath and drove all thoughts o' brambles and honey-bees clean out o' my pate, he jumps aside of her, and gets her about th' middle as he did that day under th' pear-tree, and quoth he, "Lass," quoth he, "dunnot break my heart! dunnot break th' heart that loves ye more than a' that's in the earth, or th' heavens above, or th' waters below! Say ye love me, and ha' done with 't."

Then gives she up herself to him for one beat o' her own breaking heart, the poor madcap, and she leans on him with all her pretty self, as though begging him to take her against her own will, and then a cry breaks from her, half human, and half like th' cry o' a hurt beast, and she saith,—

"Shame on ye, shame on ye, to forsake th' lass ye ha' sworn to

wed! Get thee back to her straightway, or ne'er look me i' th' face again!" And she leaps back from him, and points with her arm, as stiff and steady as th' tail o' a sportsman's dog, towards th' village, and she saith again, "Get thee back to her; get thee back to Ruth Visor, and wed with her ere this month be out o' the year!"

Then lifts he his sullen head, and looks at her from under his brows like a smitten blood-hound. And he saith back o' his clamped teeth, like as 'twere a dog gnarling in his throat, "Curse ye for a false jade!" saith he. "Curse ye for as black-hearted a jade as e'er set an honest man on th' road to hell!" And he turned, and cleared th' stile with one hand on 't, and went his ways.

And th' lass stood and looked after him as still as though she were turned into a pillar o' summat, after th' manner o' th' woman i' th' holy book, and both her hands grasping her breast. But anon there comes a trouble o'er her face, like as when a little wind doth run across a gray pool at eventide, and her lips begin to tremble, like as though some red flower a-growing on th' bank was shaken by 't, and her eyes all full o' woe, like th' eyes o' some dumb thing as cannot word its sorrow; and all at once she falls upon her knees, and thence upon her forehead on the ground, and afterwards to her whole length, with her strong hands grasping th' flowers and grass on either side o' her, and tearing them up with th' crackling noise that a horse makes when 't grazes. But no sound escapes her, whether a sigh or a groan. Well, well, comrade, I cry thee patience if I do stumble here a bit: I cannot think on 't now without a tightness i' my throat, any more than a man can think o' th' day his first child was born to him without his heart leaping hot in 's throat like the flame to th' bellows. Well, well! Fill up, I say; fill up. Remember th' old days, when thou wast more ale-washed than th' bottle itself. Where be I i' th' narrative? Yea, yea, 'tis there,—'tis there; I mind me o't now.

No sound 'scaped her, but presently she lifts herself up upon her knees again, with such heaviness as a horse overburdened doth get him to his feet, and she holds out both her arms i' th' direction where th' lad hath vanished, wi' th' grass and flowers yet fast in her clinched hands; and she saith twice, i' th' voice o' a woman in travail,—

"Never will he know, never will he know," she saith; and then, "Oh, God!" she saith, a-lifting her hands again to her breast. "Summat's broken here," she saith, full meek, like a body that's looked a many time on pain,—*"summat's broke; summat's broke,"* o'er and o'er again, as though she would use herself to th' sound, as 'twere. Then all at once did a deep cry break from her. "God, O God," she saith, "show me how to bear 't! My God, my God, show me how to

bear 't." And she got to her feet, and sped down th' lane like one blind, running first into th' hawthorn bushes o' this side, then into th' quick-set hedge o' th' other, and tearing out her loosened tresses on th' low-hanging branches o' th' pear-trees, so that I traced her by her hair i' th' twigs, like as thou wouldst trace any poor lost lamb by its wool on the brambles. Now, it did almost break my own heart to say naught to her concerning all o't, but I knew that 'twould but grieve without comforting her; and rather would I 'a' had my old heart split in twain than bring one more ache into her true breast. So naught say I. Never a word, comrade, from then till now have I e'er said to her about that time.

Well, for all's fine talk, Master Hacket went no more to hell than do any other men that marry,—an' less than some, seeing as how a did not marry a scold, which (God forgive me, or her, or both o' us) I have done. Yea, comrade, I will commemorate this our first meeting in eight years by confessing to thee that my wife (in thy ear, comrade)—that my wife was a scold. Sometimes I do verily think as how women like Mistress Lemon be sent unto men to keep 'em from pondering too heavily concerning the absence o' marriage in heaven. By cock and pye, man, as I live, I do honestly believe that I would rather be a bachelor in hell than the husband o' Mistress Lemon in heaven.

But to come back to th' lass. And, now that I think o' th' lass, comrade, I am not so sure that a scolding wife is not well paid for by a duteous daughter. Nay, I am sure o't. Methinks I would 'a' been wed twice, and each time to a shrew, could I but 'a' had my Keren o' one o' 'em. Ay, even so, even so.

Well, as I said,—or as I meant to say,—Master Hacket wedded th' Visor hussy within two weeks o' th' day whereon he and my Keren had 't so fierce i' Sweethearts' Way. And therein are two meanings: they fell out as is the way with sweethearts, and they fell out i' th' lane so called.

Well, well, let me crack a quart o' sack with thee, comrade, and a joke at th' same time.

A married Ruth Visor, and they went to Lunnon Town. And on th' night o' their wedding, as I sat by the fireside i' th' kitchen a-mending my tools (for 'twas on a Saturday night), and Keren abed, and Mistress Lemon a-peeling o' leather-jackets to make th' Sunday pie,—

"Wife," saith I to her (a-mending my tools, as I ha' said),—"wife," quoth I, "would 'twere our lass were wed to-day!"

"For why?" saith she. No more, no less.

"For why?" saith I. "For the why I think a lass is happier wed to th' man she loves," saith I.

"'Tis not so I've found it," quoth she, a-peeling of an apple so that thou couldst 'a' put his whole coat back and not 'a' known 't had e'er come off.

Then quoth I, a-chuckling in my throat at having so snared her, "right glad am I to find out that thou lovest me!" quoth I.

"If thou'st found out that," quoth she, "thou'st greater than Columbus," quoth she, "for thou'st discovered something that never was," quoth she.

"Bodykins, woman," saith I, a-losing of my temper, "then for what didst thou marry me?"

"For a fool," quoth she. "And I will say as I ha' got the full o' my bargain," quoth she.

Whereat so wroth was I that I said naught, knowing that if I did open my lips or move my hand 'twould be to curse her with th' one and cuff her with t'other.

By and by saith she, "And where the goujer! wilt thou find a man good enough in thy eyes for th' lass?" saith she.

"Not on earth," quoth I. "Neither in this land, nor that other across the sea," quoth I.

"Ay, ay," quoth she. "Very like thou wouldst have th' wench to wed with an angel," quoth she; "t'd have all thy grandchildren roosting on a gold bar, and their dad a-teaching of 'em how to use their wings," quoth she. "Or with one o' th' red men i' th' new country, to have them piebald red and white, like a cock-horse at Banbury Cross," quoth she. And with that up she gets, and flings the apple-parings into th' fire, and gets her to bed without more ado. Where-upon day doth again find me i' this very tavern.

Well, well, a year had passed, and things were jogging very peaceful like, and Keren settled down as quiet as a plough-broken mare, when one day as I sit i' th' kitchen while th' lass mends my apron there comes a fumbling at th' latch like as though a child made shift to open it. Then quoth I, "Belike 'tis little Marjory Pebble, or one o' the Mouldy lads over th' way;" for the babes all loved Keren, and, now that she was waxed so quiet, th' lads left her more to herself, and she would sit on th' bench by the cottage door and make little kick-shaws by th' hour,—elder-wood whistles, and dolls o' forked radishes, and what not. So quoth I, "Belike 'tis little Marjory Pebble," quoth I, and, th' lass having her lap full o' my apron, I went and opened th' door. And there, comrade, a-kneeling in th' grass outside, with her head all hid in her kirtle as she had kneeled two years ago on t'other side o' that very door, was Mistress Ruth Hacket; and she was a-sobbing as though her heart would break. And while I stand staring,



ere I could find a word to my tongue, comes that lass o' mine and pushes me aside like as though I had been little Marjory Pebble—ha! ha! And down goes she on her knees beside th' lass, and gets an arm about her, and presses down her head, all hid as 'tis in her kirtle, against her breast, and she saith to her,—

“What troubles thee? Tell Keren, honey. So so! What troubles thee? Tell Keren.”

And from beneath her kirtle th' poor jade sobs out, “He's gone! he's gone! he's gone! They've taken him to work on th' big seas,—and our child not yet born,—and me so ailing; and, oh! I want to die! I want to die!”

Then saith that lass o' mine, saith she, “Father, do thou fetch some o' th' birch wine out o' th' cupboard and bring it to me in a cup;” and to the girl she saith, “Come, then; come, then,” like as though she had been coaxing some little spring lambkin to follow her unto its dam; and she half pulls and half carries th' wench into th' house, and seats her on a low stool i' th' chimney-corner, and kneels down aside of her. And when I be come with th' drink, she takes the cup out o' my hand, and makes th' wench drink 't, holding it to her lips with one hand, while with the other she cossets her hair and cheek. And by and by, seeing myself forgotten, I do withdraw into the room beyond, and wait till I be called, that th' lasses may have 't out together.

Now, Ruth's folks were aye so poor that scarce could they keep clothes on their backs and food i' their bellies; and it hath sometime occurred to me how that the Lord might 'a' given such as could not provide for themselves, a coat o' wool or o' hair, that would 'a' covered their bodies, after the manner of a sheep or goat,—the righteous being clad i' th' first fashion, and the wicked after th' last.

Well, well, I must on. I see thou art waxing restless, comrade. Not so? Well, drink, drink, then, that I may feel thou art well occupied while that my old tongue wags.

So poor then were Ruth's folks that I said to myself, said I, “What i' th' name o' pity,” so saith I,—“what i' th' name o' pity is to become o' the poor lass?” but I had scarce asked myself th' question when my lass answers it for me.

“Father,” saith she, a-coming and standing afore me with the empty cup turning on her long fingers,—“father,” saith she, keeping those gold-colored eyes o' hers on mine (methinks they were coined o' th' same wedge as her heart o' gold),—“father,” saith she,—just so,—“considering all things,” saith she, “I'm going to keep th' lass in my room till her child be born,” so saith she.

Then saith I, pulling her down into my arms, “Lass,” saith I,  
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"verily do I believe that not only is every hair o' thy sweet head numbered, but that each one is blessed with a separate blessing!" And what with my love for her, and my admiring of her goodness, and my pride in her, and what with her pity for the poor girl in th' other room, we did shed enough tears between us to ha' o'erflowed th' empty cup in her hands.

So she held me about th' neck with both arms, and like to ha' run me mad with kissing th' back o' my neck (for I was e'er one o' your ticklish sort). I stood it bravely, however, seeing how she loved me, and kissed her too whensoever I could get a chance for th' tightness o' her hugging. And so we settled it. But Mistress Lemon was yet to be consulted.

Ready enough was I to shift that job on my lass's broad shoulders (seeing as how a reputation for courage with his wife is ne'er believed o' a man, at any rate, and as how th' wench had a way o' managing her mother which sure none could 'a' had that were not of her own flesh). And that night, when her mother was returned from a round o' gossiping, th' lass tells her all (having i' th' mean time put Ruth to bed atween her own sheets). Well, ne'er saw I my wife in such a rage.

"What!" saith she, "thou hast ta'en it on thyself to offer my bread and meat to a good-for-naught hussy as ne'er had a civil word for any o' us! Thou hast given her bed-room under my roof without so much as 'by your leave'! Thou godless hussy, thou! Where be th' jade? I say, where be she? Where be she?"

"Where thou shalt not come at her in thy present humor, mother," saith the lass, standing with one arm reached out across the door-way, like as though in verity she had been the mother and her dam a naughty child.

"How? Dost word me? dost word me?" saith my wife. "How? dost take any stray cat to kitten in my house an' then word me too?"—so saith she.

Then saith th' lass, "Well can I understand," saith she, "how if thou canst speak i' this fashion o' thy sister's child thou canst also speak to thy own as sure no mother e'er spoke ere this." Then, changing all suddenly her tone, and dropping down her arm from the door, "Go an thou like," saith she, "to abuse the poor creature who hath come to ask thy help in time o' trouble; but just so surely as thou dost turn her out o' door to lie i' th' straw like any common callet, just so sure do I follow her, to fare as she fares, and all the village shall know what thou hast done."

Then for some minutes did they twain stand and gaze upon one another, and at last down flumps my wife into a chair as though she would

break it in pieces for very rage ; but, being waxed sulky, and her own wrath cowed as 'twere by her daughter's more righteous wrath, she saith nothing more of 't, good or bad.

In three weeks' time th' child is born, and as sound and as pretty a babe as e'er I clapt eyes on ; and Keren a-dangling of him as natural as though she herself had been a mother, time and again.

"What say'st thou now, lass?" quoth she. "Wilt trust Keren after this?"

"Is he sound, verily?" saith the poor little dame, looking shyly upon him.

"Never a spot so big as the splash on a guinea-flower!" saith Keren. "And ears like sea-shells."

So, after a-kissing of them both, and th' top o' th' babe's head (as 'twas permitted me to do), I steals out and leaves them together.

Well, ne'er saw thou a child grow as did that child. Meseemed he sprouted like corn after a rain ; and in five months a was waxed so strong a could stand on 's feet a-holding to his mother's kirtle. But, strange to say or not, as thou wilt have 't, he did seem to love Keren more than he did th' mother that bore him, a-crying for her did she but so much as turn her back, and not sleeping unless that she would croon his lullabies to him. Mayhap it was because her strong arms and round bosom made a more cosey nest for him than did th' breast and arms o' his little dam ; but so was 't, and nearly all o' her time did th' lass give to him. Neither did it seem to rouse aught o' jealousy in Ruth's heart : she was too busy a-looking for th' return o' s father to bother her pretty pate o'ermuch concerning him. And she would sit and talk o' Robin, and o' Robin's goodness, and o' Robin's sweet ways and words and doings, until I thought sometimes my poor lass's heart would just break within her if 't had not been broken already these two years. And one day, as she kneels beside th' cradle,—Ruth having gone to see her folks for th' day,—I come in unknown to her, and stand to watch th' pretty sight. There kneels she, and Ruth's red shawl o'er her head to please th' child (Keren ne'er had any bright colors o' her own those days),—there kneels she, I say, beside the cradle, and kittles him with her nimble fingers, and digs him i' th' ribs after a fashion that would sure 'a' run me crazy (though it hath ne'er yet been proven what a young babe cannot endure at the hands o' women), and punches and pokes and worries him, for all th' world like a kitten worrying a flower. And he, lying on his back, kicks with both feet at her face, and winds all his hands in her long hair, and laughs, and bubbles, and makes merry, after the fashion o' a spring stream among many stones. And by and by a change falls o'er her, and she waxes

very solemn, and sits down on th' floor by th' edge o' th' cradle, with one arm upon 't and her head on her hand, and she looks at the babe. In vain doth he clutch at her hair and at her kerchief, and reach, with pretty broken murmurings, as of water through crowding roots, after his little bare toes: never so much as a motion makes she towards him. But at last up gets she to her knees, and takes him fiercely into her strong hands, and holds him off at arm's-length, looking at him; and she saith in a deep voice (such as I had not heard her use for two years), saith she, "For that thou art not mine," saith she, "I hate thee; but—" and here came a change o'er all her face and voice and manner, like as when April doth suddenly wake in the midst o' a wintry day in springtide,—“but,” saith she, “for that thou art his, I love thee!” and she took him to her bosom, and bowed down her head over him so that he was hidden all in her long hair, but the bright shawl covered it, so that, what with her stooping, and the hiding of her tresses, a body coming in suddenly at the door might 'a' easily mistaken her for Ruth.

It was thus with th' man who at that moment strode past me and caught up child and woman into his embrace. “I have come back to thee,” he said,—“I have come back to thee. Look up, wife; Ruth, look up.” But when she did look up, and he saw her face as white as morning, and her hair as black as night, and her tall figure like to a young elm-tree,—ay, when she looked up, ne'er saw I a man not dead seem so like death. He drops down his arms from about them, as though smitten from behind by a sword, and he staggers and leans against th' table, and lets fall his head upon his breast, staring straight in front o' him. But she stands looking upon him. And I got me out with all speed: so ne'er knew I more o' what passed between 'em, saving that he did take away Ruth with him th' next day, and she as happy as a bird whose mate hath come back to 't with the springtide. But a knew how that my lass had taken his wife into her bed, and nursed her through her sickness night and day, after the hard words he had spoken unto her and the ill names he had called her. And that was all I cared to know. He had set th' iron in my lass's heart, and now 'twas in his own; and for th' rust, it did but hurt him more. Ay, ay, comrade, thou knowest what I do mean.

Well, the winter passed, and spring came on again, and 'twas in the May o' that year that I did break my hammer-arm. God above us only knows what would 'a' befallen us had 't not been for my Keren. Wilt believe 't? (but then I think thou'lt believe a'most anything o' that lass o' mine now,—eh, comrade?)—th' lass did set to work, and in two weeks' time a was as good a farrier as was e'er her daddy afore her.

Bodykins, man! thou shouldst 'a' seen her at it: clad from throat to feet she was in a leathern apron, looking as like mine own as though th' mare's skin whereof mine was fashioned had as 'twere foaled a smaller one for th' lass—ha! ha! and her sleeves rolled up from her brown arms, and th' cords a-standing out on them like th' veins in a horse's shoulder. And so would she stand, and work th' bellows at th' forge, until, what with th' red light from the fire on her face, and on her hair, and on her bare arms, I was minded o' th' angel that walked i' the fiery furnace with th' men in holy writ. And when a pounded away at a shoe, and her young arm going like a flail,—chink, chank—chink, chank,—and th' white spatters o' hot iron flying this way and that from th' anvil, meseemed 'twas as though Dame Venus (for thou knowest how in th' masque twelve year gone this Yuletide 'twas shown as how a great dame called Venus did wed wi' a farrier called Vulcan,—I wot thou rememberest?)—as though Dame Venus had taken away her hammer from her goodman Vulcan, to do 's work for him. By my troth, 'twas a sight to make a picture of,—that 'twas, comrade.

Well, ne'er saw I such trouble as that arm gave me (and 't has ne'er been strong since). First 'twould not knit, and then when 't did 'twas all wrong and had to be broken and set o'er again. But th' lase ne'er gave out once. Late and early, fair weather or foul, a was at th' forge; and a came to be known for as good a smith as there was in all Warwickshire. But, for that none had e'er heard tell o' a woman at such work, or for some other reason, they did come to call her, moreover, "The Farrier Lass o' Piping Pebworth."

One day, as we sat i' th' door o' th' shop, a-resting, and talking together,—after a way we had with us even when she was a little lass,—there rides up a young gallant, all dressed out in velvet and galloon, and a feather in 's hat, and long curls hanging about his shoulders. Oh, ay, a was bonny enough to look upon. So a draws rein at th' door. And saith he,—

"Art thou th' Farrier Lass o' Piping Pebworth?" saith he.

Saith she, arising to her feet, and standing with crossed arms like any man,—saith she,—

"Folks call me so," saith she. "But my name is Keren Lemon."

"A sour name for so sweet a lass," saith th' gallant.

"Would thou hadst sweetened that old jest with some new wit!" quoth she.

"Thou art sharp o' tongue," saith he.

"I shoe horses with my arms, not with my tongue," saith she.

"As I live, a witty jade!" quoth he. "Thou dost much amuse me, maiden."



"My wit was not fashioned any more for thy amusement than for the shoeing o' thy horse," quoth she. "So, if thou dost not purpose to have him shod, ride on!" saith she.

Then saith he, to himself as 'twere, "Verily," saith he, "they should call thee the harrier-lass, for thou hast run down and found my manners, when that old hounds have failed;" and to her he saith,—

"I do purpose to have my horse shod, maiden; and I cry thee pardon for having given thee offence."

"It is easier to give offence than pardon," saith she. "Howbeit, thou art pardoned. Say no more." Whereupon she sets to work, and, taking th' horse's foot atween her knees, falls to filing his hoof in such wise that I could not 'a' done better in her place, though the Queen should ask me to sup afterwards at St. James's. But the stranger could not hold his tongue; and when he saw her working th' bellows, and a-making of th' shoe, and th' way she swung th' great hammer, "By my troth," saith he, "I would I could paint thee as Sally Mander to give to th' Queen," saith he.

Then saith my lass, "I know not of any wench called Sally Mander," saith she, a-burning of th' horse's hoof with th' hot shoe; "but if she consorts familiarly with such as be above her," so saith she, "methinks 'tis as well for both o' us that I know her not," saith she,—every word o't just as I tell thee.

Then saith the gallant, clapping hand to thigh so that it made such a sound as when a young child is trounced, "By my troth," saith he, "an thy brows be not worthy o' a coronet, ne'er saw I any that merited to wear one. What wouldst thou if thou wert a lady, lass?"

She saith, a-rolling up of her sleeves a little tighter, and looking up at him as he sate again upon his horse, "Meanest thou if I were the wife o' a lord?" saith she.

"Even so," saith he, laughing. "Verily thou hast come at my meaning with a commendable quickness. Well, an if thou wert the wife o' a lord, what wouldst thou do?"

Then saith she, speaking very slowly, and crossing of her arms again upon her breast,—saith she,—

"I would bring up such sons as were born to me to behave worthily o' their station in life, and not to forget their manhood by speaking with insolence unto such honest maids as had never offered them affront." Whereupon she did up with her kit o' tools and pass by me into th' forge; and th' man rode on with a reddened visage.

But it befell only two days later that a came again to th' forge, his horse having cast another shoe.

And again th' lass sets all to right for him, he keeping a civil tongue

in 's head this time; and o' that we thought naught one way or th' other. But when a comes a third time, and yet a fourth and a fifth and a sixth, "Father," saith th' lass,—“father,” saith she, “this must be stopt,” saith she.

“Ay, verily,” saith I. “But how wilt do 't?” saith I.

“I'll do 't, never fear,” saith she.

And a did, comrade. Ha! ha! I'd trust that wench to make Satan keep to heel like any well-broke puppy. 'Twas in this way. The next time th' gallant comes riding up (that being th' seventh time in all, ye mind),—well, the next time up comes riding he, and he saith to her, saith he, “I have come to ask thy service yet again, damsel,” saith he; “but Merrylegs hath cast another shoe.”

Then saith th' lass,—ha! ha!—every word as I tell thee, comrade,—saith she, “Methinks, my lord, if my work hold no better than that,—methinks,” saith she, “'twere as well thou went for th' shoeing o' thy horse to Timothy Makeshift, as lives in Marigold Lane,” saith she. “For if it come to th' ears o' others how that I will shoe a horse one day and th' next how that he will cast th' shoe,—if it so be known,” saith she, “no more custom will I get to keep my father and mother in their old age.”

Then doth he leap down from his horse, and he doffs his hat as though my lass had been any fine lady; and quoth he,—

“Well and justly hast thou spoken; and I do stand confessed of my fault. But, maiden, thou wast not born unto th' life thou ledest; and here in thy presence I do ask thy father to bestow upon me thy hand. I am Sir Dagonet Balfour, of Balfour Hall; and if thou art willing I will make thee my lady.”

Now I was struck dumb as though my tongue had jumped forth o' my mouth, and never a blessed thing could I do saving stare, comrade. But that lass o' mine,—that lass o' mine, comrade,—she stands and looks at him, and never so much as a glint o' red in her face. And saith she, “My lord,” saith she, “if that thou meanest what thou hast said, thou hast forgotten thine estate and not remembered mine. Since God hath not made me a lady, methinks it is not in the power o' one o' His creatures so to do. But I do thank thee for seeking to honor me, and wish thee joy when thou shalt take in wedlock some high-born maiden.”

Then saith he, “An I wed not thee, ne'er will I be wed. What! dost thou think I can look on in patience and see a woman such as thou following the trade of a farrier?”

Then saith she, “If Jesus Christ followed th' trade o' a carpenter,” saith she, “sure,” saith she, “Keren Lemon can follow th' trade o' a

farrier," saith she,—every blessed word as I tell thee, comrade. And no more would she have to do with him, but got her into th' forge and left him standing there.

Well, thou might 'a' thought that was th' end o't. Not a bit,—not a bit, comrade. Th' knight would be a-riding up at all times and in all weather, and somehow 't gets out i' th' village (though not through my lass, I warrant ye) as how he doth in verity seek to espouse my Keren. Well, o' all th' tiritts and to-do's as e'er ye heard on!

Methought when Mistress Lemon found out that th' girl had refused th' gallant's offer th' house would be a tighter fit for us three than its shell for an unhatched chick. 'Twas worry, worry, worry, from morn till night, and from night till morn it was worry, worry, worry, till I scarce knew whether 'twould be better to murder my wife and hang for 't, or leave her alone and live with her.

"Th' hussy!" quoth she,—“th' ungrateful hussy! a ought to be tossed in a blanket,” quoth she, “and thou along with her, thou jack-pudding, thou ravelling!” quoth she.

“If I be a jack-pudding,” saith I, “I ha' more descendants than most such,” saith I.

“Yea,” quoth she, “verily,” quoth she; “and all nine o' th' lads be jacks,” saith she, “and th' wench as very a pudding as e'er fell to pieces for want o' being held together,” saith she. “Out on ye both! I'm done with ye!”

“For that, God be praised!” saith I, and left ere she could answer.

But one day as I sate i' th' kitchen, a-cosseting o' my lame arm as though 't had been a babe, I hear a sound o' wheels and a clatter o' horses' hoofs; and, lo! there be a chariot pulled up afore the door, with four gray horses a-making play with their trappings, and a coachman, all wig and gilding, a-sitting on th' box. And ere a could move, out steps a fine dame, with her hair all in hillocks as 'twere, and a paling o' lace round about her head, like as 't had been a flower-garden, and a farthingale to 'a' covered th' big malt-pot with as little to-do as a hen covers an egg. And up comes she to th' door, and her tire-woman a-holding of her robes, and two footmen going before, and in she comes,—like as though Riches and Death had a' th' same right to enter a poor man's house without knocking. And saith she to me, saith she, a-filling up o' the room with her finery, like a cuckoo ruffling out its feathers in another bird's nest, saith she,—

“Be this th' cottage o' Humfrey Lemon th' farrier?” saith she.

“It be so; and I be he,” saith I.

“And be thou th' father of th' wench they call th' Farrier Lass o' Piping Pebworth?” saith she.

"I be, an' proud o't," say I, a-beginning to think that she might 'a' knocked at th' door, for all her greatness.

"Where's th' lass?" saith she,—as she might 'a' said, "Where's my glove?"

Then saith I, "Madam," saith I, "most like she's gone about her business," saith I.

"My good man," saith she, after a fashion that did cause me to feel aught but good,— "my good man," saith she, "dost thou know to whom thou speakest?"

"Verily," saith I, "thou art ahead o' me there, madam."

"Boor," saith she, "I am the Lady o' Balfour Hall."

"An' so could my lass 'a' been, had she willed it," saith I; but, ere I could further forget myself, in comes Keren by another door, and she saith,—

"Father, do thou go out, and leave me to speak with this lady." Then to th' dame she saith, "Your ladyship," saith she, "I am Keren Lemon, that be called th' Farrier Lass. What wouldst thou with me?"

Then I got me out o' th' room, but not out o' hearing distance; and this is what followed.

"I have heard," saith th' dame, "these reports concerning my son Sir Dagonet and thee, and, to my sorrow, I find upon inquiry," saith she, "that they be true. Moreover, though it doth shame me to the dust to confess it, I have had an interview with my son Sir Dagonet," so saith she,—every word o't as I tell thee,— "and he is determined in his purpose o' ruining his life and th' happiness o' his mother. Therefore I have come to thee, to ask that thou persistest in the course which thou hast begun," saith she. "And here," saith she, "is gold to hold thy tongue concerning my visit unto thee." And therewith she did count down ten broad gold pieces upon th' kitchen table. "I must also ask thee," then continued she, ere my lass could answer her, "to allow me to remain under thy roof until my carriage be returned from th' other end o' the village, where it hath been sent with my tire-woman to purchase some ribbon to tie my parrot to 's perch."

Never a word saith my lass, but she goes to th' door and opens it, and, lifting up her voice, she halloos to a little ragged urchin who is at some spot on th' other side o' th' street; and he being come as fast as his little shanks would bring him, she bids him enter, and, taking him up in her arms, she lifts him up so that a can reach th' gold on th' table, and saith she,—

"Thou'rt not o'er-clean to touch, my good little mouse," saith she, "but thou'rt cleaner than that stuff thou seest. There, lad, that's for

thee, if an thou'lt run to th' other end o' th' village and bid them return at once with my lady Balfour's carriage,"—so saith she. Then, th' lad having stuffed all 's doublet with th' gold, she sets him on 's feet, and off a scuttles on th' best-paid errand e'er chanced since th' world began. And my lass, having courtesied to the thunder-stricken dame, gets her outside (where I go nigh to smothering her with kisses), and leaves her ladyship in possession o' th' kitchen.

Well, comrade, right sure am I that thou dost think that was the end on 't. Not a bit. Sir Dagonet did himself come to th' cottage th' very next day to see th' lass, and they had many words together, and at last he did accuse her o' false pride and proud humility. And saith he,—

"Wouldst thou make misery for the man who loves thee best of all the world, merely to satisfy a notion o' thine own? Greatness and goodness," saith he, "dwell in the heads and hearts o' mankind, not in their birth or purses. I do ask thee, with all respect, to be my wife, and I am prepared to face th' anger o' my mother and o' th' Queen. Ay," saith he, his face gone red as a girl's, and comes nigh to her,— "ay, maiden," saith he, "I am even ready to seek th' new country with thee as my wife, and to leave title and lands and Queen and mother behind me."

Then saith she,—and I had not seen tears in her eyes for many a day,—

"My lord," saith she, "well and nobly hast thou spoken, and with all my soul do I honor thee for it, and I thank thee with all my heart and soul. But, my lord, even were there not thy rank and position atween us, there is atween us," saith she, "which would hold us as far apart as the sea doth hold this England which we live in and th' new country o' which thou didst speak. For," saith she,—and she speaks in a steady voice, howbeit 'tis very low, and she keeps her sun-like eyes on his,— "for, my lord," saith she, "all the love that was mine to give hath been another man's these many years."

Then saith he never another word, but bends his knee and kisses her long brown hand as though 't had been th' Queen's; and he gets him from th' cottage.

Now, two more years were sped since that Ruth had left us, and sometimes would we hear through friends o' th' little lad and 's mother and father, and always was Ruth a-sending of pretty messages to Keren, —her love, and her thanks, and how happy she was, and th' boy so like his father,—and more than I remember.

A full year had th' lass been at work in my shop, and my arm no more fit to hammer than afore. So I looks about to get a lad to help



her in her work, seeing as 'twas too much for one wench. And, Lord ! th' trouble I had ! Ten lads did I try, one right after th' other ; and one would be saucy, and another dull, and another would take 't into his pumpkin head to fall in love with th' lass ; and all o' 'em lazy. But, God-a-mercy ! how's a man to tell a lazy lad till he ha' tried him ?—unless it be old Butter. Ha ! ha ! I ha' just minded me o' th' way he used to treat th' lads that came to Amhurst to hire for under-gardeners. He would stand with 's owlish old visage a-set on 's hoe-handle, for all th' world like a fantastic head carved out o' a turnip and set on a stick, and a would let th' lad go on with 's story o' how Dame This commended him for that, and o' how Dame That commended him for this, and o' how a had worked under my lord So-and-So's head-gardener and in my lady So-and-So's own hot-houses ; and when a had got through, never a word would old Butter say, but a would just step round behind th' lad, as solemn as a grave-digger on a cold day, and a would lift up th' tail o's doublet and look at th' seat o's breeches. And if they were fairly worn a would hire th' lad ; but if an they were much worn a would say, "No work dost thou get from me, my lad," would a say : "thou sittest down too often to work for Anthony Butter,"—so would a say,—every word o't just as I ha' told thee. Ha ! ha ! And all the time as sober as a coroner inspecting a corse. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Methinks I can see him now,—th' old zany.

Well, well, a was a good man, was Anthony Butter ; and if a was a bit puffed up with 's own importance, a's charity ne'er got in a like condition that it did not bring forth some kind act.

Well, th' months swung round, and 'twas nigh to Martlemas in that same year, and one day as I sat i' th' forge door, a-swearing roundly to myself concerning my lame arm and how that 'twould not mend, up comes galloping a man like one distraught, and a child on th' saddle afore him, and a flings himself down with th' child in 's arms (making no shift whate'er to hold th' horse, which gallops on with th' reins swinging), and a cries out, a-setting of th' child on my knee,—a cries out,—

"For God's sake, help me !—my child hath been bit by a mad dog ! Help me in some way, for th' love of God !"

And I saw that 'twas Robert Hacket that crouched and quivered at my knee like a hurt hound ; and th' child as like to him as one leaf on a tree is to th' other. But ere I could do or say aught, comes that lass o' mine, and ups with th' babe in her arms, and he roaring as lustily as any bull-calf with th' wound in 's little brown arm, and she sees where the beast hath bitten him. Then sets she him down again on my lap, and runs and fetches a bar o' iron and heats it i' th' forge till 'tis white-hot, and all th' time th' poor father a-sobbing, and kissing of th' babe,

and calling on me to help him, like as though I were God Almighty. And while he was so doing, and the babe like to burst with weeping, and I gone mad with not knowing what to be at, comes that wench, comrade, and jerks up th' babe, and sets th' white-hot metal in 's soft flesh.

Ay, comrade, a did, and a held it there till where th' dog's fangs had been was burned as black as th' anvil. And then, when 'tis done, and th' babe again upon 's feet, and we two for praising and blessing o' her, down drops she all in a heap on th' floor atween us, like a hawk that hath been smitten in mid-heaven. Then 'twas, comrade, that th' babe was left to endure his pain as best he might: never thought more did 's father give him that day; but he runs and lifts th' lass in 's strong arms, and bears her out into th' fresh air, and he calls her his "dear," and his own, and his life, and his Keren, till, had 't not been for my lass's coming back to life, I would 'a' struck him on th' mouth for a-speaking so unto her and he th' husband o' another woman.

But no sooner opes she her eyes than he hath both her hands hid in one o' his and close against his breast, and she lying back in 's arms as though she were any chrisom child, and her big eyes wide on his, and he saith to her,—

"Lass! lass!" saith he, "I ha' come to marry thee, an thou wilt have me," quoth he. "I ha' come to marry thee; and may God bless thee for saving th' child!"

Then did I understand; but she saith, with her great eyes not moving,—saith she,—only one word,—*"Ruth?"* saith she, even so, once, low like that,—*"Ruth?"*

"Ay, lass, I know," he saith unto her. "I know," he saith. "But all's well with Ruth: Ruth is in heaven."

Then saith she, while a light leaps out o' her tearful eyes, like as when the sun doth shine suddenly through April rain,—saith she, as she were breathing her life into th' words,—

"Methinks I be there too."

And also did I understand her, how that she meant that to be lying in th' arms o' him she loved, after all those weary years, was like being in heaven; but he questions her.

"How, lass?" saith he. "Where dost thou think thou art? Thou art in thy true love's arms," saith he.

"Ay, there is heaven," she saith.

And I stole away to get th' babe some kickshaws i' th' village, that they twain might be alone together.

Well, well, all that was two year ago, comrade,—two year ago; and now that lass o' mine hath a babe o' her own, and as valiant a

rogue as ever bellowed. Thou must come and sup with us to-night. Na, na, I'll take no refusal—dost hear? I will not. And a word o' persuasion i' thy ear, comrade: Mistress Lemon hath been dead this twelvemonth, comrade. Ah ha! Wilt a-come the now? That's well. And thou shalt hear that lass o' mine troll thee "Jog on, jog on," and "Mistress mine, where art thou roaming?" and "Listen, Robin, while I woo." Come, comrade, come. But stay; let's crack another drink together ere we go. Joel! What there! Joel! I say! Another quart o' sack for Master Turnip!

*Amélie River.*

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MY LOVE GOETH FORTH.

I.

SOFT is the sky, and the joy of birds  
 Breaks from the copse on the budding brae,  
 And the air hath the dream of the peaceful herds  
 That graze in the fields to-day,  
 And the brook hath a turn in its wavering strain  
 That steals to my heart like a passionate thought:  
 The phantoms of evil assail me in vain,  
 And I set the world's wisdom at naught.

For my love goeth forth, and her robes are white,  
 White like the clouds at the break of the dawn,  
 Fair, fair, and a madness doth burn in my sight  
 Lest the vision shall be withdrawn.  
 My love goeth forth, and the lingering air  
 Lifteth up the soft tresses that shadow her eyes:  
 'Tis an angel, I say, hath been drawn by my prayer  
 To come down from that land in the skies.

II.

What envious hand doth lay  
 The keen blade to the grasses?  
 What blight hath turned to gray  
 The flowering woodland passes?

III.

Dull is the sky; the mingling joy of birds  
 Sounds from the dell, but music's balm hath fled.

I hear the lowing of returning herds,  
But hope and love are dead.  
The brook's soft wave doth murmur at my feet,  
Like some lost voice that calleth from afar ;  
The withered leaves sail like a mournful fleet  
Which cometh back from war.

For my love goeth forth, and her robe is white,  
White like the snow in the cleft of the hill ;  
My love goeth forth with the king in his might,  
And her hands are crossed and still ;  
My love goeth forth, and my wild despair  
Cannot lift the soft lashes which shadow her eyes :  
'Tis an angel, I say, that in spite of my care  
Goeth back to that land in the skies.

*Robert Burns Wilson.*

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## OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

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THE grievances of authors are being aired a good deal just now both in England and this country. There the complaint is mainly against the publishers and the unfair distribution of profits. Here it is more particularly against editors of periodicals and unfair discriminations. There the author does not get fairly paid for accepted work. Here he does not so much as get a hearing. In England the number of periodicals is relatively large and the prices paid by them small. While competition may be keen, there is probably no such pressure upon their pages as in this country : hence the different direction of the complaints.

While there is no doubt some cause for dissatisfaction in both cases, it must be said that the main difficulty is beyond cure. It is the grievous overcrowding in all branches of literary work. Now, as editors and publishers do not make the demand for literary wares, they cannot be blamed for that over-production which leads to small prices in the one case and in the other leaves a vast amount of material unsold.

Nor can editors be charged justly with the existence of rings, cliques, mutual admiration societies, literary puffery, whitewashing, and log-rolling. They may take an improper advantage of these things, but they do not create them.

Equally unjust it is, as well as foolish, to blame the editor for choosing such matter as he thinks most interesting to the class of readers he addresses. If his magazine is to live, he must not only try to do this but succeed in it. He is not, therefore, primarily a critic, though he must be endowed with critical faculties. He does not determine the rank of the articles submitted to him from

a literary stand-point, nor necessarily please himself with his selections. Of course he cannot, even if the degradation of his publication and the disgust of his intelligent readers were not in question, compete with the "enterprising" journals for the "beats" and sensations which swell their subscription-lists, since these are for one day only. But within pretty well defined limits he must know and supply the public demand. He must fill his sails with the trade-winds.

It follows that the writer who has a reputation, other things being equal, will be preferred to one who has not. Do we not all like to see these great names in the table of contents, even if we sometimes skip their articles? The reputation may or may not be deserved. Its commercial value only is the question at issue. To a sensitive person with high ideals, some of the means by which it may be acquired are peculiarly distasteful. He must follow literature as a business or trade. It requires many ingenious little devices to attract attention, modest advertising of one's abilities, some judicious sending of trumpets before him. I do not say that this is in the interest of literature. I do not say that the fame of such a writer will endure. That depends, as with the merchant, upon what he has and what he can do, after he has attracted the public attention. But I do say that these are the conditions of success, and that it is idle to gibe at destiny. If one seeks only the approbation, companionship, and sympathy of those who look upon literature as the highest of the fine arts, if he would climb the steep mountain-walls to the clear, fine air of the skies, if he aspires to a place among the serene and untroubled immortals, let him not complain because so few have been found worthy of the seats of the high gods. If thou wilt still climb, go in peace, my brother, and God's blessing upon thee. But leave behind the burdens that we bear here,—the lower rewards for which we strive. Here, at least, these commercial motives and conditions must be met. They are involved in that law of the "survival of the fittest" which measures out the life of all. Writer, editor, publisher, magazine, law, government, religion, all alike are subject to it. It may be that it is for this world only and does not extend beyond the grave. Let us, therefore, not be unjust. Above all, let us not be unphilosophical. In all this the editor has done us no wrong.

Nevertheless, the author, however obscure and "unavailable" from the commercial stand-point, has certain rights that the editor is bound to respect. He has a right to the editorial courtesy, for one thing, with all which that implies. He has a right to the honest, impartial judgment of the editor within the limits specified. He is entitled to the candor and fair dealing, at least, which are called for in other relations of life. He has a right to assume that the publication is what it advertises itself to be, and that the editor means what he says. If a magazine claims to be an exponent of American thought and culture, he has a right to assume that it is not the organ of a mutual admiration society or run in the interest of a local clique. He has a right to suppose that his article will be received with pleasure and read with care.

Now, if certain of our magazines are made up a year ahead of articles specially engaged, then it is evident that their editors cannot fulfil these very obvious duties to the volunteer contributor. This may be a good way to edit a magazine: it certainly seems an easy one. With plenty of money to pay the prices asked, there ought not to be much difficulty in making up an excellent magazine. Having done this, the editor, leaving little details to his assistants, may disport himself until the time comes for making up another year's schedule. His right to do this is not at all questioned, but if this plan is adopted it ought



to be frankly avowed. On the door of the office should be a card, saying, "No outsider need apply." At the head of his magazine should be some such notice as this: "Volunteer contributions are not desired. Not one in a hundred stands a chance of acceptance. As a mere concession, such articles will be examined by readers or subs in a perfunctory way. If in that way something should be found so original, so striking, and so superior to the average contents of this magazine as to give a reasonable hope that the writer will prove to be a *rara avis*, his article will then be submitted to the editor, and may perhaps be published next year or the year after." In place of this they solemnly assure us that all articles are adjudged strictly upon their merits, and the work of the unknown writer, if meritorious, is as readily accepted as that of the best known;—nay, more, that they have a special fondness for bringing out the unknown and obscure; that they are constantly digging for hidden treasure; that they rejoice more over one gifted contributor whom they have thus dug up than over the ninety and nine specially employed writers who are in plain sight. Let us be just. Let us be philosophical, but let us also be honest.

\* \* \* \* \*

Meantime, the advice of outsiders or those writers who have succeeded in gaining the public ear to those who have not is very, very good. "Do not mind the literary rings and cliques," says one. "They have always existed. *In the long run* they amount to nothing. No writer ever achieved permanent fame through favor, and no one ever missed it by reason of hostile criticism." Ah! and have none fallen by the wayside through utter neglect? Besides, the writer to whom this advice is given was not thinking a great deal about permanent fame. His thoughts had a tendency to turn to the next breakfast, and whether it would be plain steak with bread and butter or plain bread without the butter and steak. But in such cases as this, another—Colonel Higginson, for example—advises a connection with a newspaper. Doubtless as a pot-boiler that would be a good thing. The only difficulty is in making the connection. When you really inquire into it you find that the only approach is by way of the street. When for two, three, or more years you have run about the city picking up all those choice little morsels that so largely fill the daily papers, you may hope for a humble desk in the editorial department. But if you come as a contributor to sell your wares you will probably be disappointed. It is not literature newspapers want, but news. Their small needs in the former line they will supply from those literary jobbing-houses called syndicates. Smaller papers will get literature from newspaper unions in stereotype plates at so much a column.

All this I say without bitterness, not by way of complaint, but in the interest of truth. I do not know that there is any help for it. It appears to me that the newspaper has swallowed up other fields of literary work, which, however, it by no means cultivates. Some time, probably, matters will take a different drift, but most of us will then be like the disabled members of the "Society on the Stanislaus,"—without interest in the "subsequent proceedings."

*The Author of —.*

EDITORS often say they like to have their contributors "boil down" their productions. The majestic editor often tells us poor fellows who are trying to write our way into his heart and check-book, how to get up our manuscript. He wants it done in a neat, legible hand, like his own,—never in pencil, and never on both sides of the paper. The editorial eyes must not be weakened in a wild-goose

chase after an idea that has to be tracked through a forest of pot-hooks thick-set with an underbrush of erasures and interlineations.

Dear Mr. Editor, I that speak to you have sent, not to you, sir, but to that other editor who returned it, as I am sure you will not,—I have sent, I say, just such manuscript as editors call for, fair, clean, written on one side, not with a pencil, but with a good gold pen, stamps enclosed for return IF declined; the whole thing "neat, but not gaudy, as the monkey said" on the memorable occasion "when he painted his tail sky-blue."

Now, good Mr. Editor, what do you suppose the man to whom I sent that model manuscript did with it? Why, sir, he went straight through it with a blue pencil,—put Cain's mark on paragraph after paragraph, as if he intended to use what he did not obliterate. I suppose that was what he calls editing; and I do not wonder that editors complain of hard work. Then he turned over one of the leaves, and on the blank side, where he doesn't want contributors to write, he wrote a note to me in blue pencil (it made me blue enough to read it) giving his reasons for *not* using my article. Then he added his "regrets." He is the same editor who insists on my writing "*only on one side of the paper.*" What does he do that for? Is it to enable him to make my article unfit to send to another editor by scattering his blue pot-hooks on the side that he told me to leave blank? Do editors realize, when an article comes to them, that if they don't want it somebody else may? Who would send out an article with the marks of a former refusal spread over it, to try its chances with another editor? No, sir: that article must be recopied before it can be sent out again.

While the contributor is making the second copy, he calls to mind the story of the parrot that was left in a minister's family by its owner while he went to Europe. The owner of the bird returned. He took his parrot home. Every time the door-bell rang, that bird would exclaim, "D—n that book-agent!" What do you suppose a contributor says when his neat manuscript comes back, not only rejected, but black with his own ink and blue with the editor's pencil-marks? I know very well what I say.

There are editors who accept an article, name the price they will pay for it, keep it a couple of years, and then, like a girl who says "yes" when you ask her and "no" when the wedding-day comes, send it back when it is too old for anything but your own waste-basket. Does this happen often? No, but it does sometimes.

I have known a religious editor, or rather the editor of a religious paper, to take an article offered "at your usual rates," and publish it, but fail to remit, and, when gently reminded that there should be a *quid pro quo*, maintain a silence that was not golden but was brassy. And he has not paid for it yet. I hope he will see this article, be pricked in his heart, and send me his "usual rates" for stolen property, with about five years' interest at ten per cent.

In the main, I admire the editor. He means to be fair. But when he cannot use an article, if he only would take a slip of paper and write out his views on that, instead of defacing a manuscript that is "written in a neat, legible hand, on one side of the paper," if he would only refrain from making such manuscript unfit to send to some other editor, I should feel that rejection is not such a very dismal matter after all.

E. L. B.

THE authors of the two preceding articles are sensible and fair-minded,—rare enough qualities in the case of authors who air their grievances in public. With E. L. B., indeed, the editor of *Lippincott's* can have no dispute. E. L. B., expressly reminds us that it is other editors he is alluding to: the things he complains of could never have occurred in the *Lippincott* sanctum, and the editor of that periodical can only hold up his hands in horror and express his sympathy, with just so much vicarious shame as may arise from the consciousness that it is at the hands of his own brethren—of men of his own calling—that this helpless victim has suffered. But with the other writer, wise and temperate as he is in the main, the editor may exchange a word or two, and take this opportunity, also, of answering many other complainers who are neither wise nor temperate. And first as to that question of literary log-rolling which has of late been harped upon so much. "The Author of —" acknowledges that editors are not responsible for this evil, though they may take an improper advantage of it. But does the evil exist? It is true, of course, that many critics allow their friendships to warp their judgment. It is true, also, that many of them, and these are the ones whose judgments are most likely to have weight with the public, guard so carefully against favoritism that in their anxiety to keep straight they may be warped on the other side, they may err in over-severity. But it is untrue that either the favorable or the unfavorable notices have any serious influence upon the sale of a book, or in raising the market-value of an author's reputation. Any publisher of experience will bear witness to this. Year after year books that have nothing to commend them to the public save the good opinions of the critics fall dead from the press, year after year books that are assailed by the critics but liked by the public run into countless editions. The only commercial use of a criticism is that it is one more means of calling public attention to the fact that such and such a book is in existence. If the public like the book they will buy it; if they don't they will let it alone.

But are editors subject to partiality? That is a more important question; for, though critical partiality can do no harm, editorial partiality can do a great deal, by depriving younger and unknown men of one of their most important channels for reaching the public. The question cannot be answered by a simple yes or no; but an appeal to circumstantial evidence may go far towards settling it. The duty of an editor is simply that of a caterer. He provides the public with the food that it craves, only ascertaining that what it craves is food and not poison. Now, his success or failure in this duty is a simple matter of mathematics. It may be decided by an appeal to the publisher's ledger. It may be decided by a glance at any newsdealer's stand on publication-day. A magazine which is the mere organ of a mutual admiration society, or run in the interest of a local clique, would not sell outside of the radius of that admiration society, that local clique. Another proof may be cited. New York is said to be the centre of literary log-rolling. In one of the great monthlies published in that city there recently appeared an article on the new writers of the South. The mere fact of the publication of this article in New York seems sufficient proof that outside talent is recognized in that hot-bed of log-rolling. But this is not the only bit of evidence to be deduced from the article. Of the score or so of writers mentioned therein, hardly one was known to the public five years ago. How, then, did they win their spurs? Almost without exception, in the magazines,—in *Lippincott's*, in *Harper's*, in the *Century*, in the *Atlantic*. They made no concerted movement to capture these journals; they are too widely scattered over

the Southland for any, even the most captious, to imagine that they too are members of a mutual admiration society: each one fought his way single-handed and conquered through his own individual merits. And every writer in the United States has the same chance that they have.

The same chance, but no better chance. It is true that the magazines are overcrowded. The editor of this magazine, for example, receives every year from four to five thousand articles. Out of these, the inexorable limitations of space will allow him to accept only about two hundred. Now, fully half of those two hundred may be supplied by authors of established reputation, whose work is always acceptable, not only because there is an audience eager to peruse every line from their pen, but also because it is pretty sure to be good work. They may not always be able to give of their best, but their second-best is generally ahead of the best work of even the cleverest tyros and amateurs. This is susceptible of ready proof. Single out what you believe to be the poorest story of Howells or James or Aldrich or Stockton or any one of a dozen writers who might be mentioned, write as good a story yourself, and, unknown though you be, it will certainly be accepted.

But to continue. About one hundred articles a year can be accepted from among the four thousand or more articles sent by lesser or less known writers to the editor of *Lippincott's Magazine*, and in order to decide as to these one hundred it is necessary for him to examine all the four thousand. Here is where the average contributor is most sceptical of the editorial good faith. He doubts whether his manuscript will ever be examined at all, and he is fond of playing guileless little tricks by which he thinks to convict the editor. The editor of this magazine, for his part, confesses to a wicked pleasure in humoring the contributor, and where he finds two pages glued together he carefully leaves the glue undisturbed, and where pages are placed upside down or in wrong numerical order he does not interfere with the disarrangement. It is not often necessary to read an entire article in order to reach an accurate estimate of its merits. And some articles it is not necessary to read at all, because from their very nature they are unsuitable. Translations, for instance, are not wanted. Illustrated articles are not wanted (in spite of the fact that this is not an illustrated magazine, the editorial eye is continually feasted on sketches or photographs sent in with an article suitable only for an illustrated magazine). Theological articles are not wanted. Heavy political disquisitions are not wanted. Articles on Julius Caesar or on the Interstate Commerce Bill are not wanted. And so on *ad infinitum*. More than this, articles which are in themselves suitable may not meet the momentary wants of the magazine. An editor may have so much poetry on hand or so many short stories that he may be disinclined to accept any more. In all these cases the manuscript may be returned without a reading.

A hue and cry has been raised against the printed notice which so frequently accompanies a rejected article. This notice has sometimes travelled back to the editor with the mystic legend "Chestnuts" or "Rats" scrawled over the top. Protests of all kinds have been received against it, and the editor has been conjured to write a letter of encouragement, advice, or criticism. It takes so little time to write a letter! Yes, dear friends, it takes little time to write a letter, but it takes a very long time to write five thousand; and contributors should consider the limitations which his merely human nature imposes upon the editor, and refrain from adding that last straw to his burdens which may break the editorial back.

## BOOK-TALK.

IN the present passion for the study of comparative folk-lore there is nothing which the public have so badly needed as a book by some person not clever enough to be a crank, who would simply collect and systematize the results of the latest researches without distracting the reader's attention by any obtrusive theory of his own. We have become weary and a little suspicious of Sir George W. Cox and his solar myth hobby, of Max Müller and his disease of language hobby, and we are even a little distrustful of Andrew Lang lest in his zeal to demolish other people's theories he should be too anxious for the acceptance of his own. Such a book as the public needed has at last been given them in W. A. Clouston's two handsome volumes, "Popular Tales and Fictions, their Migrations and Transformations" (Scribner & Welford). The author truthfully says that "there is no work precisely similar to this in our country, in which variants of the same general stories are detailed,—not merely indicated by their titles,—thus enabling the reader to judge for himself of their common origin, and the transformations they have undergone in passing from one country to another, without the labor of consulting a great many different books, some of which are not readily accessible." Something of the kind was indeed attempted by Dunlop in his "History of Fiction" and Keightley in his "Fairy Mythology;" but Dunlop lived a century before the birth of comparative mythology, so that his book has all the assumption and positiveness of ignorance, while Keightley was one of the pioneers of the new science, and knew just enough to be hampered by the consciousness of ignorance. Clouston's book is not in any sense exhaustive. It simply takes up a handful of popular stories and gives the variants that are to be found in the literatures and folk-lore of different nations, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions as to their genesis. But he has no special system of selection: there is no reason why "Whittington" should be included and "Cinderella" excluded, or why the "Pot of Basil" should be excluded and the "Matron of Ephesus" included; and the work could be indefinitely continued by the addition of a new volume every year. So far as it goes, however, it can be recommended as thoroughly reliable and sensible.

When Charles Perrault's collection of fairy-tales made their first appearance they were read with avidity by the general public, which is known to be frivolous and light-minded. Occasionally a man of intellect devoted his leisure moments to their perusal, but it was with a certain air of condescension, of unbending. "I borrowed one or two idle books of *Contes des Fées*," Swift confesses rather shamefacedly in his *Journal to Stella*, "and have been reading them these two days, although I have much business upon my hands." If Swift's ghost ever revisits the earth in these days it must be greatly surprised to see idle books of a similar character in the hands of the wisest thinkers and most profound scholars of the day, and still more to learn that these men devote a lifetime of study to the elucidation of the tales they contain, and to speculations upon their origin and diffusion,—speculations which are expected to establish the most important sociological



truths, to solve linguistic problems, to reconstruct the story of man in what are now known as the prehistoric stages of his existence, and even—in the opinion of many sanguine souls—to overturn or make us reconsider much that is now accepted as fundamental religious truth.

Aristotle says that the determination of what a thing is, is *ὡς ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ἀποκρίνῃ*, "as the judicious would determine." Matthew Arnold calls this admirable common sense; and in truth it is good that the world is inclined to follow the lead of those whom it looks upon as the judicious, for the judicious are right in fifty-one cases out of a hundred, while the fool is right only in forty-nine. It is in the recognition of that one possible case above the average that all human progress lies, and in order to effect this recognition nature forces men into fashions and conventions of thought, so that gradually, slowly but surely, the fool shall run his thoughts into the same mould as that of the judicious, and shall finally learn wherein they are right. But, as the judicious go wrong in forty-nine cases out of the hundred, it is good also that these conventions should be sufficiently plastic to alter from generation to generation, so that the errors of the judicious, the right thinking of fools, may also come in due time to be recognized as part and parcel of the world's stock of knowledge. The folly of one generation is often the wisdom of the next.

In the Middle Ages the judicious occupied their minds with the acknowledged classics of literature, and with the most ingenious scholastic disputations in regard to the future destiny of man. To the custody of clowns and fools they left all those charming fictions and superstitions which, descending from a remote antiquity, contained within them the most reliable records as to the past history of man; and upon the very ignorance of the lower orders depended the traditional transmission of these myths in something like their pristine purity. The great romantic revival of the eighteenth century, which instilled a new life into literature, was simply an acknowledgment on the part of the judicious of the merit of these traditions from the purely artistic point of view, just as the recent kindling of philosophical interest in comparative folk-lore has been an acknowledgment of their scientific value.

The judicious have always grieved over the corruption of language, over the slang phrases and the grammatical misconceptions that defile its purity and outrage its subtler beauty. And from their point of view they are right; for if rules of grammar and principles of order were not universally respected wherever they are apprehended, there would be no such thing as language at all. Yet it is precisely through the misapprehensions of fools and clowns, through ignorance and stupidity, that the most sonorous and magnificent of modern languages have had their origin, and it is through similar misapprehensions, ignorance, and stupidity that they are continually growing in volume and in riches. The most valuable and significant additions that are made to our vocabularies are coined in the gutters, and not in the laboratories or the libraries of the judicious.

Charles Mackay complains in his Autobiography that the songs he has thrown off in the heat of the moment, "There's a Good Time Coming, Boys," "Cleon hath a Thousand Acres," etc., have obtained wide popularity, while the serious and earnest work of his lifetime has received the approval only of a

few choice minds,—of the judicious, in short. Here, again, the judicious are wrong, the masses are right. The only permanent additions to English literature which Dr. Mackay has made are the very songs which he despises. Mr. Palgrave says, in his preface to "The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics," "The editor trusts he may add without egotism that he has found the vague general verdict of popular fame more just than those have thought who, with too severe a criticism, would confine judgments on poetry to the selected few of many generations." That treasure-trove to Shakespearean scholars, the recently-discovered "Return from Parnassus," has pretty well established the fact that Shakespeare in his own day was the delight of the groundlings and the scorn of the judicious. Macaulay has shown us how the tinker Bunyan was for generations despised by the learned and cherished only by the unlearned. Many of the greatest poets—Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, Walt Whitman (the list might be almost indefinitely extended)—have found the majority of the judicious arrayed against them. In our country to-day, some of the most vital and vigorous verses are written by poets to whom the judicious are inclined to deny even the name of poet, yet whom the public has taken to its heart,—Will Carleton and Ella Wheeler.

There is no question upon which the judicious are so thoroughly agreed as that the interest which the general public feel in the private lives of great men is vulgar, wrong, and disgraceful. That people who, perhaps, have never read a line of an author's works should stand agape to discover whether he parted his hair at the side or in the middle, whether he maltreated his wife, whether he got intoxicated, seems to be the height of folly. Tennyson's famous lines spring to the mind at once:

For now the Poet cannot die  
Nor leave his music as of old,  
But round him ere he scarce be cold  
Begins the scandal and the cry:

"Proclaim the faults he would not show:  
Break lock and seal: betray the trust:  
Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just  
The many-headed beast should know."

Ah, shameless! for he did but sing  
A song that pleased us from its worth;  
No public life was his on earth,  
No blazoned statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best;  
His worst he kept, his best he gave.  
My Shakespeare's curse on clown and knave  
Who will not let his ashes rest!

A splendid piece of invective, truly, hot with the awful wrath of the just man. Yet what, after all, if the clown and knave be right? What if the interests of the race are subserved by this vulgar curiosity, even if it be at the expense of the individual great man? If so, the interests of the race are paramount. "For," to quote Tennyson against himself,—

"The individual withers, but the race is more and more."

In a former Book-Talk we have agreed (writers always have the pleasant privilege of assuming that their readers agree with them) that Goethe was wise in asserting that Nature reveals her secrets in her monsters, or, as the *mot* might be paraphrased, she proves her rules by her exceptions. It is of the greatest importance to the race that those rules should be established. The proper study of mankind is man. Now, geniuses are the exceptions which prove the rule. The abstract fact that a man beats his wife is of no value; but taken in connection with the further fact that the same man can write beautifully about the domestic affections in the intervals of wife-beating, it at once suggests a problem worthy the consideration of the profoundest sociologists. Were it not for the public avidity to hear these details, the public willingness to buy the books that supply them, there would be little chance of their ever becoming known. As the Müllers and Karl Blinds of the present spend laborious yet fruitful days over the nursery-*tales* which seemed too trivial and childish for even the leisure moments of our grandfathers, so we may foresee the Herbert Spencers and Virchows of the future making exhaustive studies in the literature of scandal and gossip which offends the taste of the judicious among our contemporaries.

No scientist of the future, however, will find much to occupy him in the "Life of Charles Reade," by his nephew, Charles L. Reade, and the Rev. Compton Reade (Harpers). This book suffers from the fact that there is so little in it to gratify vulgar curiosity. We get a few dates and statistics, and some hitherto unpublished letters and manuscripts, but we learn nothing new about Charles Reade. We indirectly learn a good deal about the Rev. Compton, to be sure (he expressly assumes all responsibility "for whatever opinions are here hazarded on men and things"), and he is an amusing personality enough, but this hardly compensates for our disappointment when we are seeking for information about his sturdy, big-hearted, wrong-headed, irascible, and eccentric uncle. Yet there does not seem to be any studied reticence on the part of the biographer. He does not shrink from exposing all the little infirmities of the mother to whom Charles Reade was so tenderly devoted; he does not hesitate to call her a domestic tyrant. Occasionally, and in the most inadvertent way, he allows a glimpse at some delightful peculiarity of the biographee. He agrees, for instance, in Charles Reade's high estimate of his own critical powers, and then he tells us that Reade rated Wilkie Collins far above George Eliot. But there is very little of this sort of thing. The biographer, in fact, is himself too much of a Reade to be able to assume the position of an outsider, or to paint his uncle as he would have appeared to the world at large.

"The World as we Saw it," by Mrs. Amos R. Little (Cupples, Upham & Co.), is a handsome octavo volume, and as a collection of photographic views is interesting enough. But every reader will know how to classify the book itself when he reads in the preface that it has been published "at the urgent solicitation of many friends." He will probably place it on the same shelf as "Six Weeks in Old France," by L. M. A. (American Bureau of Foreign Travel), which is published in the hope of aiding a children's hospital.

The Rev. John Miller's recent books "Theology" and "Commentary on Romans" (Evangelical Reform Publication Co., Princeton, New Jersey) are just the sort of books which appear valuable, and indeed indispensable, to the people

who agree with the author, and profoundly useless to all other classes. And as to a book with so formidable a title as "Unanswerable Logic" (Colby & Rich), in which a "Series of Spiritual Discourses" have been given through the mediumship of Thomas Gales Forster, the reviewer who cannot accept the logic had best refrain from confessing it.

A number of new volumes have been added to the excellent "Story of the Nations" series (Putnam's) during the last six months. "The Saracens," by Arthur Gilman, and "The Moors in Spain," by Stanley Lane Poole, give an excellent summary of the most picturesque periods in the history of Mohammedanism. The subjects of "Ancient Egypt" and "Persia" have both been intrusted to competent hands,—the first to George Rawlinson and the latter to S. G. W. Benjamin, with the result of giving us on the whole the best popular hand-books on the history of those countries. Sarah Orne Jewett writes a graceful history of "The Normans," though she shrinks a little from the brutality and ferocity of her heroes. The sketch would have been more vigorous if it had come from a male hand. "Alexander's Empire," by Prof. J. P. Mahaffy, is concise, accurate, and interesting.

"English as She is Taught" (Cassell & Co.) is, as its sub-title explains, a collection of "Genuine Answers to Examination Questions in our Public Schools." The collection is made by a teacher, Caroline B. Le Row, who vouches for its genuineness. But, indeed, the book is its own voucher. The most ingenious fancy, the most grotesque imagination, could never hit upon such whimsical distortions of thought and fact as are evolved by the half-formed brains of poor little boys and girls struggling with lessons far beyond their comprehension. The book raises alarming doubts as to the value of the system of instruction pursued in our public schools. Here, for example, is a Shakespearean essay: "Hamlet was exceedingly sensitiveness. He denounced his mother because she entered the matrimonial condition, and showed her two photographs which he said one was Hesperus and one a Satire. He made her experience great regret. He was engaged to Ophelia, but had to neglect her as he was obliged to give his attentions to revenging his father's death. His uncle was the murderer of his father, Hamlet's father. He had a very mournful existence, and was a great philosopher." This is delightfully funny; but after you have laughed, your sober second thought reminds you that the author of the essay is luminously wise in comparison with the teacher or the system that could set such a pupil to such a task. The system may be funny enough, but it cannot be very delightful to any man who pays taxes to assist in carrying it on, or who has children whose minds are undergoing its Procrustean tortures.

"The Universal Cookery Book," by Gertrude Strohm (White, Stokes & Allen), is largely a selection of the best receipts from standard authorities already approved by the public. It shows patience and industry on the part of the compiler, and praiseworthy courtesy on the part of the authors who have allowed her to lay their works under contribution.

## CURRENT NOTES.

WHILE the scientists are engaged in their interesting dispute over the question as to whether yeast as used in bread-making is composed of animals or vegetables,—many of the most advanced, as Liebig, Pasteur, Huxley, and Tyndall, claiming to have discovered that its tiny cells are formed of animalcules, and not of vegetable fungi as has heretofore been supposed,—it is well to inquire if we cannot with wisdom discard its use altogether and relieve ourselves from doubt, if not from danger. It is not a pleasant suspicion that with every mouthful of our daily bread we are munching the remains of a million, more or less, of insects.

There are many reasons given why yeast should be altogether discarded in the production of food. It is hardly disputed at this day that there are qualities in the yeast itself which are detrimental to the digestive organs. In addition to this, the care required in manipulation, the difficulty in arresting fermentation at the right stage so that the bread while fully light shall not be sour, the knowledge or experience necessary to apply the varying qualities of different brands of flour and yeast to produce similar results, are all so great that nine times out of ten the yeast-made bread comes out of the oven either unpalatable or unwholesome. There is also the peculiarly oppressive and injurious effect upon the digestive organs produced by such bread when eaten warm, or in its freshest and best condition; while the continuance in the stomach of the fermentative action from the debris of the yeast that invariably remain in the bread, causing acidity of the stomach, heartburn, flatulence, and those other unpleasant sensations bordering upon dyspepsia, and the destruction of a large percentage of the most valuable and nutritive parts of the flour by the fermentation required to produce the carbonic acid gas for its own leavening, are still more serious objections.

Yeast, as it is well known, does not of itself raise the bread more than the match which is applied to the fuel gives the heat by which the loaf is baked. As the heat from the fire is the product of the destruction of the fuel, so the carbonic acid gas which raises the loaf of bread made with yeast is the product of the destruction of the flour from which the loaf is made. The yeast simply incites the elements of the flour to an action that is destructive and unnatural. During the destruction or putrefaction of these elements of the flour the carbonic acid gas which lightens the bread is given off, at the sacrifice, however, of its best elements and at least ten per cent. of the flour itself.

If, therefore, the bread can be raised in a mechanical way and made equally light without the use of yeast, and if this process also preserves all the constituents of the flour without chemical change or impairment, avoids the destruction which inevitably attends the fermentative process, and produces not only a greater proportion of bread but an article more wholly and certainly palatable and wholesome, and with the outlay of much less labor, no prejudices or old-time customs should be permitted to stand in the way of its general adoption.

It has been demonstrated by the government chemists, as well as by practical experience in baking, that pure carbonic acid gas is produced in the dough,



and light, spongy, sweet, and wholesome bread is made more readily by the use of the Royal Baking Powder than with yeast or with any other leavening agent. The action of the baking powder is mechanical entirely, and causes no chemical change in the flour. The leavening gas is obtained by the decomposition or destruction of the leavening agent itself, instead of at the expense of the constituents of the flour. There is no destruction of the gluten or sugar, but all those elements are preserved which were intended by nature, when combined in our bread, to make it literally the "staff of life."

Bread raised in this way, it is asserted by the hygienists, possesses greater wholesomeness, because of its superior lightness and tenderness, which permit its more ready and perfect assimilation, and because of its assured freedom from acidity.

It will not be astonishing if the next decade shall witness the substitution of the Royal Baking Powder in the place of yeast for bread-making to the same extent—and that is almost wholly—that it has taken the place of the old-fashioned cream of tartar, soda, and sour milk in the making of biscuit, cake, and the lighter forms of pastry.

A CORRESPONDENT writes to us from Macon, Georgia, to call our attention to the fact that Vassar College is not, as Miss L. R. Smith asserted in her article on social life at that institution, the first woman's college in the world. "Just twenty-three years before the date assigned as Vassar's first start in life was founded the old Georgia Female College at Macon, in this State. . . . It suffered the usual penalties of being in advance of its age, and struggled through the difficulties of its early years with varying success,—or perhaps I should say want of success,—being at one time actually sold under the sheriff's hammer. It was bought in, however, by friends, and was finally placed under the management of the Georgia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. As public opinion became more enlightened, the fortunes of the college gradually improved, and under the presidency of Dr. W. C. Bass it had already entered upon a career of solid prosperity, when, in 1881, Mr. Seney's generous donation of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars set it upon a firm financial footing and brought its merits prominently before the world. The last annual catalogue shows an attendance of over three hundred students, and the college building is one of the handsomest to be found anywhere, North or South."

OXYGEN—ITS AGENCY IN THERAPEUTICS.—It is true that oxygen in an uncombined state did, and probably always will, disappoint what would seem to be a reasonable expectation of its results. So, too, has a mixture of it with common air, in various proportions, failed to produce the healing effects which have been looked for with so much hope.

But it can now be demonstrated that all these strong convictions, that oxygen ought to prove an inestimable boon to the millions who are suffering from disease, had their foundation in truth.

What, then, is Compound Oxygen? It is a combination of oxygen and nitrogen, the two elements which make up common or atmospheric air, in such proportion as to render it much richer in the vital or life-giving element.

It is a preparation of which chemists know nothing. It is not "nitrous oxide or laughing gas;" and it differs essentially from all substances used in medical inhalations. It contains no medicament, unless the elements of pure air

are medicines; and its administration introduces into the body nothing which the system does not welcome as a friend, accept with avidity, appropriate as entirely homogeneous to itself, and claim as its own birthright.

(6 C., 478.)

"MECHANICSBURG, OHIO, October 25, 1886.

"Your Home Treatment of Compound Oxygen was received September 10, and I have used it faithfully ever since, according to directions, and I am glad to say that I have derived great benefit from it. I was 'poorly, indeed, at the time of receiving the Compound Oxygen. I had *coughed* almost incessantly day and night since January, and been taking medicine every hour or so all the time, but nothing seemed to help me in the least. My cough was accompanied by a bad *diarrhoea* for about three months, which terminated in *hemorrhage of the bowels* a few days before receiving the Compound Oxygen. My *lungs* were so sore I could scarcely breathe, and I had such a fearful pain in my right lung all the time: could not lie down at all.

"After eight inhalations of Compound Oxygen my cough was some better, and at sixteen it was very much better, and I expectorated a thick yellow matter, and a great discharge of it. I have continued to expectorate this way until the past ten days, since which time it is a thick white phlegm with lumps of yellow matter. My left lung continues to pain me a great deal yet. I think I took a little cold last week. After three weeks' treatment my *diarrhoea* was checked, and has not bothered me since. I cough not half so much now as before using the Compound Oxygen. I have become very much reduced in flesh during the past few months, but in the past week or so I feel that I am gaining strength all the time. My appetite is a little better too. My friends all think there is a great improvement in me, but I am far from feeling well, and cough considerably yet. I will write you again in a few weeks, by which time I hope to be much more improved than now."

Any one desiring to know more of this remarkable remedy can send to Drs. Starkey and Palen, 1529 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for their new Brochure, called "Compound Oxygen, Its Mode of Action and Results," which will be sent free by return mail.

**HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE.**—Beware of imitations. Imitations and counterfeits have again appeared. Be sure that the word "HORSFORD'S" is on the wrapper. None are genuine without it.

SOMETHING new and desirable for horticulturists, gardeners, and all who have grounds has been gotten up by George A. Solly & Son, of Springfield, Massachusetts. It is a book of carpet and other flower-bed designs. There are many beautiful plans, so clearly drawn that any "hired man" can lay out his employer's grounds according to them. They are accompanied by a key, reference to which shows what plant or style of plant should occupy each place. Mr. Solly's long experience as a horticulturist, both in England and in this country, has been turned to admirable account in this work.

**HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE AS A TONIC.**—Dr. John Gardine, Athens, Georgia, says, "In dyspepsia accompanied with prostration from mental overwork, I think it is a fine tonic."

In the next number of *Lippincott's Magazine* an article of special interest to all lovers of base-ball will be contributed by John M. Ward, the captain of the New York Club. It will discuss the question "Is the Base-Ball Player a Chattel?" from the stand-point of law, equity, and reason, and will attack the present system of selling players from one club to another which is in vogue both in the League and in the Association. Mr. Ward is a graduate of the Columbia Law School, and is already known as a vigorous and graceful writer by the "Notes of a Base-Ballist" which he contributed to the August, 1886, number of this magazine.

**HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE IN SLEEPLESSNESS.**—Dr. Henry Tucker, Brattleborough, Vermont, says, "I have used it in several cases of sleeplessness with very pleasing results."

In last month's announcement of Miss Magruder's novel published in the present number of *Lippincott's*, it was inadvertently styled a novel of Southern life. The scene is really laid in the Southwest.

**HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE FOR WOMEN.**—Dr. Wm. E. Jewett, Adrian, Michigan, says, "I have found it particularly useful in the nervous disorders of women."

The name of the author of the successful essay on "Social Life at Cornell," in our June number, was incorrectly printed R. Spencer instead of A. Spencer. By the way, is there any harm in calling the attention of all our contributors to the fact that signatures should be written with the greatest distinctness? Printers can decipher the worst manuscript where there is anything to guide them in the context, but names can only be a matter of guess-work and ratiocination.

**HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE AS A RESTORER.**—Drs. Buck and Matthews, Springfield, Illinois, say, "In cases of nervous prostration, it strengthens by quieting nervous agitation."

A  
LAND OF LOVE.

BY  
SIDNEY LUSKA,  
AUTHOR OF "THE YOKE OF THE THORAH," "AS IT WAS WRITTEN,"  
"MRS. PEIXADA," ETC.

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"'Tis thus that an ardent youngster makes  
The Latin Quarter a land of love."

*Edmund Clarence Stedman's translation  
of Jean Prouvaire's Song.*

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